

THE CILAPPATIKARAM

Prof. V. R.

Ramachandra Dikshitar, M.A.,

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India.**

THE CILAPPATIKARAM



TRANSLATED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

By

Prof V R RAMAGHANDRA DIKSHITAR, M A

WITH FOREWORD BY
JULES BLOCH
AND
Prof K R SRINIVASA IYENGAR
★

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THE GILAPPATIKARAM

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TO THE MEMORY OF

PROFESSOR M. A. CANDETH

AND

PRINCIPAL REV. FR. F. BERTRAM, S.J.

**FOR THEIR ABIDING INTEREST IN AND LOVE OF
SOUTH INDIAN CULTURE**

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Tamil Studies have become popular among the non-Tamils, especially in foreign countries. Many Universities in the United States, a few in U.K., U.S.S.R., France and some other European Countries teach Tamil for their departments. In countries like Sri Lanka and Malaysia a large number of Tamils live. The Universities in these Countries are also engaged in the development of Tamil Studies. Within India some of the North Indian Universities have started teaching Tamil to non-Tamils.

These circumstances compel the Tamils to publish the cream of their literature in other languages, particularly in English, which is widely accepted as the leading International language.

In this context it has become essential that many more books should be brought out in English on Tamil language, literatures etc., Many Tamil scholars have made some fruitful attempts to translate a few Tamil Classics into English.

Pioneer attempts were made by the foreign Mis- sionaries and scholars like Dr. G. U. Pope, Rev. Beschi, F. W. Ellis, H. Stokes, Rev. H. Bower and others in bringing out the English version of Tamil Works.

V. R. Ramachandra Dikshatar, former Professor of History, University of Madras, planned to bring out a few translations of Tamil works. He had translated Tirukkural and Cilappatikaram into English. Cilap- patikaram was first published by the Indian branch of the Oxford University Press, by Humphrey

Milford in

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1939 and has been long out of print. His enthusiastic

son Thiru. R. Srinivasan, B. E. with his mother's

consent kindly permitted us to bring out the present

edition and our thanks are due to both of them.

We are highly indebted to Prof. K. R. Srinivasa

Iyengar, Retd. Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University

and the Acting-President of the Sahitya Akademi,

for the valuable Foreword he has written to this edition.

We hope all those interested in Tamil Studies will welcome this edition.

The Publishers.

FOREWORD

For the First Edition

JULES BLOCH

COLLEGE DE FRANCE, PARIS

I BELIEVE there is no need to introduce Mr V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar to the public, which knows him already and favourably. If, however, I have accepted the honour of writing a foreword to the present book, it is to lay stress on its special character, and to plead for more works of a similar nature.

Its significance will clearly appear
if we follow the
progress of the author's researches.
At the start, as a
research scholar in history, Mr
Dikshitar devoted his
first studies to the old Hindu
administrative institutions;
his ambition was to give a
synthetic survey of them, in-
cluding the theories of Kauṭalya and
the traditional
law-books, and also the actual
practices of the sove-
reigns. Here, of course, Aśoka comes
into prominence.
Mr Dikshitar in this connexion
happily considers, old
Tamil institutions. But he finds
this last-mentioned
subject in itself worthy of further and
deeper investiga-

tion; to quote Mr Dikshitar's own words, he 'felt more and more the need for an intrinsic study of the priceless literary treasures of Tamil'. Hence a set of essays which formed the basis of his useful book, *Studies in Tamil Literature and History* now in its second edition. Here general statements and hypotheses are not altogether lacking, and therefore the author does not completely escape from criticism.

But, happily, facts and an

analysis of contents find a large place, and there is a progressive disappearance of the historian behind the materials of history. In praising this book at the time, I regretted that instead of short notices of the contents, especially of the more archaic works, we were not also offered long or even complete translation. Now Mr.

Dikshitar himself has come to that same necessary con-

clusion; the historian has resorted to the more difficult and often ungrateful, but also more beneficent, task of translation. Let the reader have the plainest possible

access to the text; help him with all the needed current

explanations, and reserve personal inductions for the introductory survey. This will be a boon not only to the student of history but also to the literary man and to everybody interested in Tamilian culture. And this means many people at a time when so much is being done, not only to assert India's culture before the world, but also to make India known to herself, and to show in their true light the various original civilizations which all together form Indian civilization.

Among them the Tamil country can boast of an antique and original culture. A picture of India, historical or literary, will not be complete if due importance is not attached to it;

description of India will be

no more than a physical
complete if rocky Deccan

and southern deltas or backwaters are omitted.

But how many are there
who have access and are
able to enjoy or usefully consult
Tamil literary works,

especially the older ones? It is a matter of
common

knowledge that only a few can do so even among
those born in the Tamil country.

On those few lies the
responsibility of
helping their compatriots to appreciate
those works which are the particular glory
and the in-

spiration of their country, and to give outsiders a faithful rendering of them.

Scholars themselves will be benefited by that work. Need I recall what progress in Sanskrit studies has been due to translations from Sanskrit into European languages, and primarily into English? And to those interested in furthering the cultural unity of India, need I recall that those periods of history when translations were most numerous were also periods of unification and progress?

This is my plea, and the reason why I have great pleasure in recommending this present new departure of a historian.

Let me also take advantage of this opportunity to mention that already in 1900 Prof. Julien Vinson, in his *Legendes Bouddhistes*

et D' Jains, rendered into French the analysis given by Mahamahopadhyaya Swaminatha Aiyar of both the *Cilappati-kāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai* and added his own full translation of three cantos¹ of the former.

I could dilate longer on this and similar topics. Better do I invite readers to take advantage of this

beautiful poem and treatise in its present garb, and com-patriots of Mr.

Dikshitar to emulate him in translating fully as many old poems as possible, especially those of the Sangam, where there probably is still much to be discovered.

College de France }
March 1939 }

1. Cantos xvi-xviii, and also *padikam*.

JULES BLOCH



Prof. V. R. RAMACHANDRA DIKSHITHAR, M. A.,

FOREWORD

For the Second Edition

Prof. K. R. SRINIVASA
IYENGAR

VICE-PRESIDENT, SAHITYA AKADEMI,
MADRAS

When the first edition of the
late V. R. Rama-
chandra Dikshitar's close English prose
rendering of

Cilappatikaram appeared in 1939, it was
immediately

hailed as an invaluable aid to the study
of ancient South

Indian history and culture, and more
particularly to the

study of this foremost among the epics
of classical

Tamil literature. A professional historian

turning to

the study of literature, a historical researcher trying his

hand at the translation of an ancient Tamil poem into

modern English prose, an academic specialist lifting the

iron curtain between Ilango's immortal 'Epic of the

Anklet' and the great mass of modern (especially non-

Tamil) readers :

this was trebly an unusual phenomenon,

and evoked a ready

lovers of poetry alike.

welcome from historians and

People ofcourse had known vaguely for a long

time about the Tamil 'Sangam' classics, and the five

great epics: *Cilappatikaram*, *Manimākalai*,
Jeevaka-

Chintāmani, *Kundalakēsi* and
Valaiyapati; but it was

only when Mahamahopadhyaya
V. Swaminatha Aiyar-

that Hero as scholar, literary sleuth and
exegetist-

brought out definitive editions of the first three (the
remaining two are yet to be retrieved from their un-
deserved relegation to oblivion) and of the important
Sangam classics that a serious study of classical Tamil

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CILAPPATIKARAM

literature became possible. In course
of time more and

more scholars were lured to these
classics, and there was

thus witnessed a

diffusion of intelligent interest in

Cilappatikaram and the other marvels of the Golden Age of Tamil literature. It was in this favourable climate that Ramachandra Dikshitar commenced his arduous and dedicated inquiries that were presently to

bear fruit in his *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*

and, not long after, his English translation of *Cilap-*

patikaram, with a comprehensive Introduction (almost

of the size of a book) and numberless footnotes with an

almost encyclopaedic range.

Nearly 40 years have passed since the publication

of Dikshitar's translation, and it has been out of print

for quite some time. In the interval *Cilappatikaram* has seen publication in popular as well as scholarly editions, and what was once a name, a hallowed memory, has now become a part of the popular culture of Tamil Nadu. Critical studies have appeared too,

and the linguistic, artistic, political, historical, geographical, social, legendary and mythological backgrounds have been researched with patience, perseverance and discrimination. A monograph in English on Ilango Adigal by the late M. Varadarajan has been published by Sahitya Akademi in their 'Makers of Indian Literature' series. Besides, Thiru M. P. Sivagnanam's discourses on *Cilappatikaram* from numberless public platforms have helped over a period of years to familia-

rise the story, the poem and the characters to his rapt audiences in Tamil Nadu. In the cumulative result, Ilango and Kannagi and Poompuhar are now integral to Tamil sensibility, and *Cilappatikaram* has come to hold a place in our affections on a par with the

Ramayana story as sung by Kavichakravarti Kamban.

Nor is such interest or appreciation altogether confined to Tamil Nadu. It is now freely acknowledged that *Cilappatikaram* is among the supreme epics of the world, and its three-domed structure, the fiery purity and sublimity of the heroine, the startling shifts in scene and incident and character, the wide sweep of the action and the orchestrated grandeur of the whole have been admired by a choice of as well.

critics outside Tamil Nadu

Ten years ago, the French scholar, Alain Danielou's new English translation of *Cilappatikaram* appeared in the West. It was a prose rendering in the main, but the more poetically effective passages in the original were turned (though not always very

successfully) into English verse. The book had a pleasant format, and there were hardly any footnotes; and being tailored to the requirements of a world audience, it was immediately readable and intelligible. Another English translation has just appeared, *The Anklet Story* by Ka Naa Subramanyam, a well-known Tamil writer and scholar. Here too there is a mixture of verse and prose, but the rendering is rather closer to the original than Danielou's, though not as close as Dikshitar's.

And yet all translation is but a challenge and a trap, and often a terribly frustrating experience. While translations from one language into others are necessary in our multi-lingual world, translating poetry remains an almost impossible task. It is rather like the presentation of a play, about which Theseus makes this perceptive comment in *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream:

"The best in this kind are but shadows; and

the worst are no worse, if
imagination amend
them."

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CILAPPATIKARAM

Every translation is an attempt at
new creation, and
although perfection may prove elusive, each
can have
distinctive merits of its own.

It is the merest truism to say that Kannaki
is the
heart and soul of *Cilappatikaram*. The
name carries
a magic glow, a talismanic charm, for the
Tamils—but
how exactly shall we understand her? Her

role is divi-

nely passive in Pukar, fiercely active in
Madurai, and
transcendentally fulfilling in Vañci. Was
she but the
merchant-prince Manaikkan's darling
daughter—the in-
sulted and the injured, the enraged and the
transfigured?

In the canto 'Vettuvavari' in the Book of
Madurai,

Calini the prophetess thus speaks about
Kannaki in an
obviously inspired moment :

“இவளோ, கொங்கச் செல்வி; குடமலையாட்டி;
தென்றமிழ்ப் பாவை செய்தவக் கொழுந்து;
ஒருமா மணியாய் உலகிற் கோங்கிய

திருமா மணி.....”

This key passage is translated by Dikshitar
as follows

(p. 206) :

"This is the lady of the Konkunatu,
the mistress of the Kutamalai (the western hills), the
queen of the South Tamil country, and the sprout
of her (Kannaki's) prior penance; she is *tirumamani*
(literally, the bright jewel) far-famed as the peerless
gem of the world".

Thus Alain Danielou (p. 78):

"She has come, the princess of the Kongunadu,
the Tamils of the north, the sovereign of the
western hills,
the queen of the southern Tamil
land! She is the flower of virtue, a matchless jewel
crowning the Earth".

FOREWORD

And thus Ka Naa Subramanyam (p. 73):

"Lady, Queen of Kongunadu,

Goddess of
human origin, she has come amidst us. She
is the
Sovereign Queen of the western hills-she is
queen
of all the southern lands. She is the present
con-
sequence of the many meritorious acts of
previous
lives. She is a rare jewel among the
women of
the world, she is a Goddess among
women...".

There is too much condensation in Danielou's,
and too
much expansive paraphrasing in Ka Naa's;
and even
Dikshitar has to do some explaining
within the
brackets. In that seminal passage, Chālini in
a vision
sees the past, present and future at once.
Beyond the

present is the glorious future, itself a
flowing from the
past. Kannaki will be honoured in all
three Tamil
Kingdoms, and will eventually be worshipped as
a jewel
among women, a Goddess. But what was the
reason
for her birth in this "too too sullied"
earth? Was it
because of her own tapasya in her past
lives? Or was
it rather because the entire Tamil
world-Mother Tamil
herself-had aspired for
such a descent of the Divine
for redeeming the time and re-establishing
Dharma? As
the end result, not only the Tamils in the three
regions,
but the whole world itself was to benefit
from the
descent of the Divine as Kannaki and her

acceptance

and deification as Pattini Teivam.

This sample from the three renderings is enough

to show how difficult indeed is the job of translating an ancient Tamil poem into modern English.

There will of course

be no final or wholly satisfying English translation of *Cilappatikaram*, but I feel that Ramachandra

Dikshitar's conscientious down-to-the-text prose rendering

will always prove a dependable aid to both students

of history and poetry,
reader as well.

and to the common.

Cliappatikaram is structured as a 'divine comedy', Kannaki's silent suffering in Pukar being followed by her agony and anger and purgation in Madurai, and culminating at last in her fulfilment and transcendence at Vañci. Music, dance and poetry-the market-place, the court, the burning city of purgation-the battle-field, the enshrinement, the apotheosis of the benediction : all mingle and fuse to give us an endearing and enlightening and inspiring portrait of a vanished age, which is also forever involved in our affections, memories and aspirations.

I heartily welcome this reissue of Ramachandra Dikshitar's monumental study and translation, and I hope it will be received with gratitude and delight by scholars in all parts of the world. The Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society have been among the most enterprising publishers in the South, and their mis-

sionary zeal and dedicated endeavours have helped to keep aloft the thousand-tongued Torch of Tamil literature and culture. Their present publishing venture is of a piece with the rest, and deserves the widest possible acclaim.

*Mylapore,
14 July 1977*

}

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

PREFACE

SOME time after the publication of my book *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, in 1930, Mr F. J. Richards, formerly of the Indian Civil Service, wrote to me suggesting that I should undertake the writing of a handbook on the History of Tamil Literature. He also pointed out the desirability of publishing a series of critical editions of the Tamil classics with English translations and annotations. He wrote: 'I have no hesitation in pressing for English editions, for the reason that Tamil is almost a sealed book to all who are

not Tami-
lians, and it is a pity that the rest of India
does not
realize the importance of the Tamil
contribution to
Indian culture.
We can only be made to do so by
publishing for a wider circle of readers, and
English is
the most handy medium for this publicity both
in India
and elsewhere.' This letter of Mr Richards
induced
me to undertake the rather stupendous task of
attempt-
ing an almost literal translation of the most
difficult of
Tamil classics, the *Cilappatikāram*
The translation is based on
Mahamahopadhyaya
Dr V. Swaminatha Aiyar's Tamil edition
of the
Cilappatikāram. I have to acknowledge my

indebtedness

to this scholarly and critical work of the
Mahamahopa-
dhyaya. I have also derived immense benefit
from Rao

Sahib Pundit M. Raghava Aiyangar whom I
have had

to consult frequently in the course of
preparing this

work. My thanks are also due to several
colleagues

in the departments of the University and other
friends

who have been of help to me in one way
or another.

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To Professor Jules Bloch I
acknowledge my parti-
cular

indebtedness for the Foreword he has written.

I must also express my gratitude
to the Madras

School-book and Literature Society
for their generous contribution
towards the publication of the book.

I shall feel my labour amply rewarded if the
book

helps to spread Tamil culture in India and abroad.

Madras
20 April 1939 }

V. R. RAMACHANDRA DIKSHITAR

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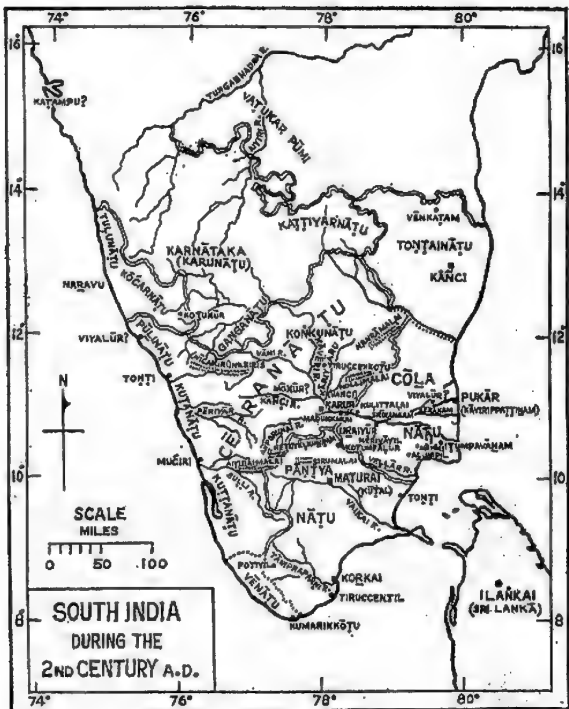
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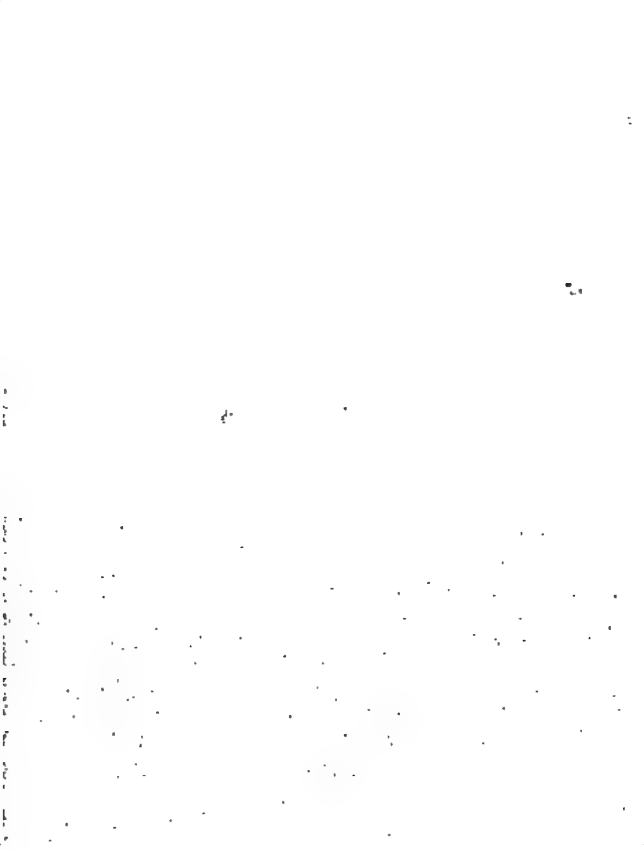
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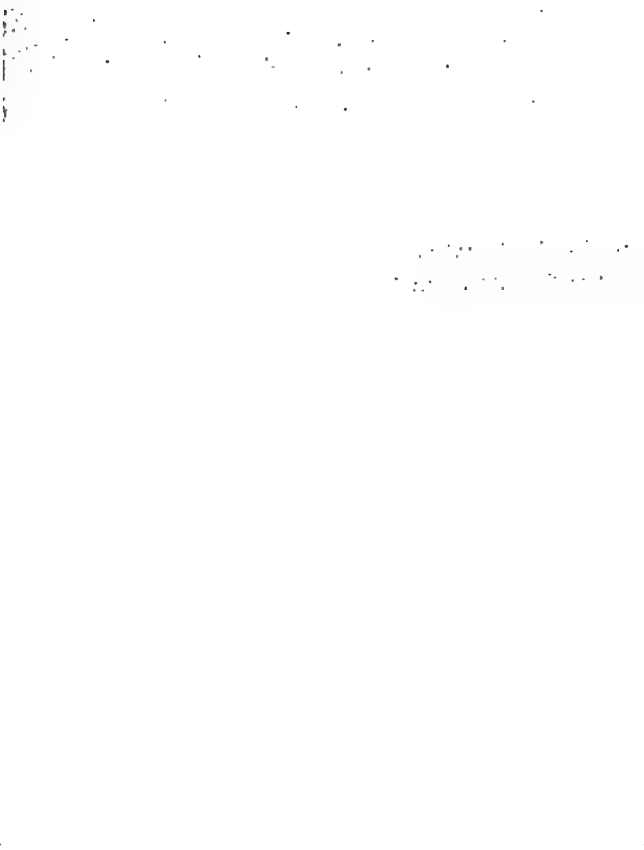
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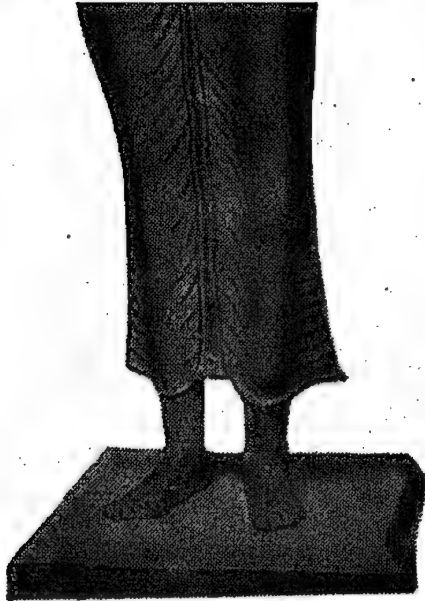
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KANNAKI

INTRODUCTION

I

THE NAME

The term *Cilappatikāram* is made up of two words, *Cilampu* and *atikāram*. Literally the title means 'the story that centres around a *cilampu* or anklet'. The hero and the heroine of the story, *Kōvalan* and *Kaṇṇaki*, set out for *Madurai* to dispose of a *cilampu* and thereby raise the capital needed to pursue a trade. In the bazaar street of *Madurai* *Kōvalan* meets the state goldsmith. The state goldsmith who has stolen the queen's anklet (similar to that in *Kōvalan*'s hand) reports to the king that he has found the thief. The king blindly believes the goldsmith and has poor *Kōvalan* executed. The heroine proves to the king her husband's innocence by breaking open her other anklet and showing that the contents of

her anklets are different from those of the queen. The Pāṇṭiyaṅ king dies of grief on realizing his blunder in having ordered the execution of Kōvalaṅ without proper investigation.

Kaṇṇaki destroys the city of Madurai by fire to avenge the execution of her husband, and is finally proclaimed the goddess of chastity.

As the story thus centres round the *cilampu*, it can appropriately be named the Epic of the Anklet.

One among the five *peruṅkāppiyam's* (*mahakavyas* of

Sanskrit literature), the *Cilappatikāram* may come under the category of *toṭarnilaicceyyuḷ* and in it we find *iyal*, *īcai*, and *nāṭakam* as its chief characteristics. *Iyal*, *īcai*,

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CILAPPATIKARAM

and *nāṭakam* mean, respectively, Literary Tamil, Music, and the Drama. There will be

no two opinions about the excellence of the literary Tamil of the epic; and as regards the other two characteristics, *icai* and *nāṭakam*, the work may be described as a model of ancient Tamil musical and dramatic composition. A wealth of material is found scattered throughout the work. One is struck with wonder at the *icaippāṭṭu* or the lyric songs in which the author not infrequently indulges. The songs of Kōvalan and Mātavi on the seaside (*kānalvari*) are full of lyric charm. Equally charming are the songs sung in honour of the deity at the Aiyyaikōṭṭam, the songs of the *āycciyar* (cowherdresses) in their *kuravaikkūttu*, and the songs of the hill-women in honour of Murukan (Subrahmaṇya).

Though *iyal* and *icai* are prominent in the pages of the work, the epic contains positive elements which go to make up a dramatic composition, with the result that it can also be styled, appropriately, a *nāṭakakkāppiyam*. Adopting the modern terminology for the

classification of dramatic literature, we may say that this epic is a tragi-

comedy. The tragic elements preponderate in the story. The separation of Kāṇṇaki from her husband, her ominous dream, the equally fearful dream of Kōvalaṇ, the journey of the couple through wild forests, the unjust execution of Kōvalaṇ, and Kāṇṇaki's inconsolable distress, the Pāṇṇiyan's great grief at the injustice perpetrated by him, the plucking out by Kāṇṇaki of one of her breasts, the burning of the city, the death of the Pāṇṇiyan king and queen, are all tragic elements in the story. Notwithstanding these tragic elements which evoke the reader's sympathy and tears, the ending is happy. Both the wronged persons attain Heaven in a celestial car surrounded and celebrated by gods.

INTRODUCTION

3.

THE FORM

The form adopted is that of the *kāvya* or *kāppiyam* of Tamil literature. There are excellent descriptions of rivers like the Vaikai

and the Kāvēri, of cities like Pukār and Madurai, of forms of dancing like the *kuravaikkūttu*, of gods like Viṣṇu, of wild forests, of the celebration of marriages, etc., all affording data for reconstructing the ancient Tamil social life. Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ himself calls the

work in his preface (*patikam*) *pāṭṭuṭai* or *uraiy-
ṭaiyṭa pāṭṭuṭai*. This Tamil phrase is a free rendering of the Sanskrit term *campu*. Compositions like this contain at frequent intervals *uraippāṭṭu* (rhetorical prose). A good example of *campu* literature in Tamil is the *Pāratam* of Peruntēvaṇār.

II

THE STORY

In the fifties of the second century A.D. there lived in the city of Pukār, which was the capital city of the great Karikālaccōḷan, two merchant princes who had respectively a son and a daughter. The son went by the name of Kōvalan, and the daughter by that of Kaṇṇaki. At their respective ages of sixteen and twelve, their parents had them married

according to the fire-rites prescribed in
Vedic literature. Soon a separate
establishment was

set up for them and the young couple spent sometime
together happily. One day when Kōvalan was passing
through the busy streets of Pukār, he happened to cast
his eyes upon Mātavi, a charming courtesan of the city,
who had just won her laurels from the king of the land.
Kōvalan having fallen in love with her, left his home and
lived with the courtesan until he had wasted upon her the
whole of his wealth. There then came the festival sacred

to Indra, the God of Heaven. All Pukār celebrated it with pomp and splendour. The lovers spent their evenings in the park on the seashore entertaining themselves with music. A song of Mātavi made Kōvalan suspect that she had thoughts of another lover. This caused a change in his feelings towards her. With wounded pride he left her, as he intended, for good. He came home and opened his heart to his sorrow-stricken wife. He explained the circumstances he was in, and told her of his resolution to leave the city for Madurai to earn his livelihood. Kaṇṇaki who was a strict observer of the rules laid down for chaste wives, and who practised them to their very letter, welcomed the suggestion, and sought permission to follow him wherever he might go. He spoke to her of the difficulties of traversing, on foot forest belts and mountain-tracts full of wild animals and haunted by evil spirits bent on mischief. All this could not persuade her to stay at home. Her only desire was to share his weal and woe, and he finally assented to her earnest

wish.

With Kaṇṇaki, whose only remaining jewels were the pair of anklets, he set out for Madurai early before day-break so that no one might come to know of their whereabouts. His idea was to dispose of a *cilampu* in the bazaar at Madurai, and with the capital raised thereby to

set up some business. Kōvalaṇ and Kaṇṇaki passed along the northern bank of the Kāvēri towards the west and reached a grove. Here they met Kavunti, the celebrated woman ascetic doing penance, and bowed to her.

She offered to accompany them and show them the right path to Madurai and they gladly accepted her kind offer. All the three crossed over to the southern bank of the Kāvēri by boat and reached Uraiṇūr, the other capital of the Cōla kingdom.

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Having stayed a day there, the three proceeded to-
wards Madurai. On the way Kōvalaṇ met a certain Kau-
cikaṇ who was bringing a message of regret from Mātavi
to Kōvalaṇ. Kaucikaṇ communicated to Kōvalaṇ Mā-
tavi's protestations of her love for him. But Kōvalaṇ

sent the messenger to his own parents and asked him to

deliver the same letter to them so that they might be

relieved of their poignant distress at his secret departure.

Passing on, the couple and Kavunti reached the river

Vaikai and crossing it by boat, they reached the outskirts

of the city of Madurai. Here they came upon Mātari,

a cowherdess of the city, to whom Kavunti introduced

Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki. She was requested to accommo-

date them until Kōvalan was able to stand on his own

legs. To this Mātari agreed, and the couple repaired

to her cottage. Kavunti chose to stay outside the city

discussing questions of religion and philosophy with sages residing there.

Mātari left Kaṇṇaki in the company of her daughter

Aiyai. Helped by Aiyai, Kaṇṇaki prepared dinner for herself and her husband of which the couple partook.

Kōvalan then took one of her anklets and went towards

the bazaar to sell it. It was an inauspicious hour when he

started, but of this he was not aware. In the bazaar he

met the state goldsmith to whom he showed the anklet

and offered to sell it for a fair price.

This goldsmith, who had stolen the queen's anklet

sometime before, thought it a good

opportunity to accuse

Kōvalan of the theft of the queen's
jewel and proclaim

himself innocent. He therefore
readily consented to

Kōvalan's proposal, and leaving him in
his cottage,

went post-haste to the palace, informed
the king that

he had found out the thief who had stolen the queen's

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anklet, and handed it over to the king. Without
bestowing a moment's thought on the matter, the king
ordered his executioners to behead the thief. Followed

by the goldsmith, the executioners
came to the cottage

where Kōvalan was.

Moved by his innocent looks they

hesitated at first to

carry out the king's order, until the
goldsmith treated them to a lecture on the
theory and practice of thieving.
Thereupon one among the party of
executioners, more cruel than his companions,
beheaded Kōvalan.

In the meantime Mātari, who noticed
evil omens portending danger, arranged for a *kuravaikkūttu*
in honour of Viṣṇu and Pinnai.
The *kūttu* being over, Mātari went to
the river for her bath.
There she heard people talking
about the slaughter of the innocent Kōvalan.
She shook with fear, ran home and
informed her kith and kin. Noticing
the sorrow-stricken faces, and hence feeling
uneasy, Kaṇṇaki asked them to give
her news of her husband. Though none of them had
the heart to break

the shocking news, her persistence
made one of them

yield to her repeated entreaties.
The rude shock, and the agony which
she could hardly endure distracted her.

She raved like a mad woman, fell down on the
earth, rose

up and sobbed aloud in anguish.
Though it was late in

the night she went to the
bazaar to have a look at her hus-

band. She found him in a pool of
blood gushing out of his wounds.

Her grief knew no bounds. She cried till
she seemed to see Kōvalan rise up to
go to Heaven say-

ing to her 'Stay here'.

She could no longer endure the
wrong done to her

innocent husband. All her grief was
now turned into

anger against the king.

She went to the palace and
demanded proper justice at his hands.
She narrated her
case, proved by her other
anklet how the one supposed

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to have been stolen by Kōvalan was hers
and not the queen's, and showed how the
goldsmith had deceived him. At this the just
and repentant king fell into a swoon which
ended in his death. It was no consolation to
poor Kaṇṇaki whose innocent husband had
been irretrievably wronged. She plucked out
her left breast and threw it over the city
cursing that the city be consumed by flames.
The god of fire brought destruction to all

except the Brahman sages, cows, chaste women, children and the aged.

The guardian deity of Madurai at this time presented herself before Kaṇṇaki and narrated to her how in his previous birth Kōvalaṇ was Paratan, in the service of Vasu, king of Cingapura, who had killed an innocent merchant, Cangamaṇ by name, suspecting him to be a spy, and that was why he now had this fate. Asked as to Kaṇṇaki's future, the deity replied that on the fourteenth day from that hour she would go to Heaven invited by her husband in a celestial car.

Kaṇṇaki thereupon left Madurai and proceeding west to the Malainādu reached Murukavēl-kunram (the hill sacred to Murukā) which she ascended. There she stood under the shade of a *Vēṅkai* tree to the wonder of the people of the place, most of whom were Kuravās. When every one of them was looking at her, Kaṇṇaki left the place in the celestial car for Heaven. This they reported to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, their king. The

poet Sāttanār, who was there, narrated the events that had happened in Madurai.

The queen desired that a temple should be set up in honour of Kāṇṇaki. Ceṅguṭṭuvan who had been thinking for a long time of leading a military expedition to the north to subdue the refractory chieftains there, resolved to secure a block of stone from the Himalayas to carve out an image of the Pattiṇikkaṭavuḷ as they called her. So he started on his northern expedition through the

Nilgiris.

In the meantime there was a famine in the Pāṇṭiyan kingdom due to continuous drought. Iṣānceliyan, the Pāṇṭiyan at Korkai, offered a sacrifice of 1,000 goldsmiths to the Pattiṇikkaṭavuḷ, and the country had plentiful showers of rain. Hearing this, the kings of Koṅku-maṇṭalam, of Ceylon, and of Uṟaiyūr dedicated temples to Kaṇṇaki and instituted daily worship and the festivals. At this time, it may be noted, Gajabāhu was the king of Ceylon and Perunaṟkiḷi was the Cōḷa king at Uṟaiyūr.

After defeating the northern kings Kaṇaka and Vijaya, Seṅkuṭṭuvan brought a stone from the Himalayas and after bathing it in the Ganges returned home. A temple was consecrated to the Pattiṇikkaṭavuḷ and was endowed for daily worship. The consecration ceremony was attended by eminent kings including those of Mālva and Ceylon. After this, on the advice of the Brahman Māṭalan, the king engaged himself in the performance of Yajnas or Vedic sacrifices and spent the evening of his life in peace and prayer.

III

ITS PLACE IN THE CANKAM
WORKS

To find a way out of the tangled forest of South

Indian chronology is a very intricate task. This is

especially true of the Caṅkam works. The question of

the dates of the Caṅkam works has been discussed.¹

Roughly speaking the Caṅkam epoch may be assigned to

a period commencing with the fifth century B. C. and end-

ing with the fourth century A. D.

The *Cilappatikāram*

belongs to this epoch and is an accredited Caṅkam work,

as is also the other work of that class, the *Maṇimēkalai*.

I V. R. R. Dikshitar *Studies in Tamil Literature and History,*

2nd ed., 1936.

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Both these belong to the category of the great Epics (*mahākāvyas*) of which five are distinguished. These twin epics, the *Cilappatikāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai*, can be likened in certain respects to the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and are invaluable sources for re-constructing the history of the ancient Tamil land.

The date of the classic deserves an independent examination. This epic, which is very ancient in age, is quoted as an authority even by ancient commentators like the commentator of the *Iraiyaṇār Akapporuḷ* and *Uraiya-ciriyar* (Iḷampūraṇar). In the use of choice words and in terseness of expressions the book is unrivalled. Yet the style is simple though polished. Ornate in

expression, it has also grace and simplicity. It has already been mentioned that this epic is a treatise on the threefold classification of the Tamil language — Literary Tamil, Music and the Drama. Beginning with the drama, we have *uraippāṭṭu* or rhetorical prose compositions. The varied forms of musical composition such as *kāṇalvari* (sea-song), *vēṭṭuvavari* (hill-song), *arṇuvāri* (river-song), *ūcalvari* (song to accompany swinging), and *kantukavari* (song sung by girls while playing with balls) are worthy of note in the pages of the work. The distinguishing traits of the literary Tamil—*veṇpā* and *akavarpā* or *akaval*—are prominently seen. Of all the metres used in the poem, *akavarpā* or blank verse is the metrical form most frequently used.¹ Thus the *Cilappatikāram* is an excellent example of *ilakkiyam* or Tamil poetry. It may be noted in this connexion that the early works on music and drama have been lost beyond recovery. The *Cilappati-kāram*

may, however, be said to represent in a way the earlier musical and dramatic pieces. It thus takes a

1 *Cita.*, preface p. 9; *Tolk.* 'Ceyyul', the gloss of *Iḷam-pūraṇar* on *sūtra* 157.

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legitimate place among the extant Caṅkam works and is very valuable to the historian of South India. But the most conclusive argument in respect of the epic's place in the Caṅkam category is that the friend and companion of the author of the *Cilappatikāram*, Kūlavāṇkaṇ Cittalai Cattanār, is a Caṅkam celebrity. And this Cattanār is the reputed author of the *Maṇimēkalai*, which is a continuation of the theme contained in

the *Cilappatikāram*. A futile attempt has recently been

made to prove that these epics were post-Caṅkam works.¹

But this militates against the fact that the author of

the *Maṇimēkalai* belonged to the same age as poets like

Paraṇar² and Kapilar. We know that these two are

among the most distinguished names mentioned in con-

nexion with the traditional third Caṅkam. This, above

all, assigns to the *Cilappatikāram* a rank among the Caṅkam works.

One conclusive evidence for the second century A. D.

as the date of the *Cilappatikāram* is the complete

silence of the epic with regard to the Pallavas of

Kaṇci. This epic as well as the *Maṇimēkalai* speaks

of Kaṇci in more than one place, but does not men-

tion anywhere the Pallavas themselves or any of their

kings. The earliest of the Pallava charters—the re-

cords in Prakrit—are three in number: the Mayidavolu

plate, the Hirahadagalli plates, and the British Museum

plates. These have been published in the volumes of

the *Epigraphia Indica*, and range over a period circa A. D.

1 E.g. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar's *History of the Tamils*,

ch. XXIX; K. N. Sivaraja Pillai's *The Chronology of the Early*

Tamils, p. 42. The latter says that he is mainly guided by the

literary test.

2 For Parāṇar's reference to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan see *Patir.*, fifth

Ten; *Puram.*, st. 369; *Akam.*, st. 212, etc.

200-350. This means that we have inscriptional evidence of the early Pallavas and the earliest of them could be dated from A.D. 200.¹ The evidence of Cañkam literature shows that, up to the occupation of

the city by the Pallavas, Kañci was one of the northern outposts of the Cōlā kingdom, and was the capital of the Cōlā Viceroy. In the age of the *Cilappa-*

tikāram the Cōlā Viceroy was Tonṭamān Iḷam-Tiraiyan celebrated in the *Perumpaṇārruppatai* by Uruttirañ Kañ-ṇaṇār. Iḷam-Tiraiyan was a chief of the Tiraiyar who preceded the Pallavas at Kañci, and who were subordinate to the Cōlās in the second century A.D. Thus

the *Cilappatikāram* which actually refers to Kañci, does not mention the Pallavas even indirectly, while sub-

sequent literature represented by the
Tēvāram and the

Tivyaprapantam often makes references to
the Pallava kings. The inference is therefore
conclusive that the

Pallava kings came to reign at Kañci after
the composi-

tion of the *Cilappatikāram*. Otherwise it
is difficult

to understand the silence of the epic and
other Caṅkam

works on the Pallavas or any
member of that
dynasty.²

IV THE DATE OF CERAN CENKUTTUVAN

A stanza in the *Puranānūru*³ and a few in
the *Akanā-*

*nūru*⁴ compared with a reference in the
*Cilappatikāram*⁵

show that the early history of the Cērās can be carried

1 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, pp. 246-55, 'Two Pallava Copper-plate Grants'. ed. H. Krishna Sastri.

2 R. Gopalan, *The Pallavas of Kāñci*, p. 9 ff.. (Madras University, 1928).

3 St. 2. 4 St 65, 168, and 233.
5 Canto xxiii, ll. 55-60.

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back to an epoch before the Mahabharata war. For we hear of one Utiyañcēral, a Cera king who acted as the host to the combatants of that war. An analytical study of the *Patirruppattu*, so far as the political data contained in it are concerned, furnishes us with ample material to reconstruct the chronology of the three ancient South Indian dynasties, and particularly that of the early Ceras. Of the Ten Tens (*Patirruppattu*), the first and the last have not been traced, and we must congratulate the talented editor, Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, for presenting

us with the available eight Tens, all very important as preserving in a nutshell an account of the ancestry of the Cēra Kings, to whom these poems have been dedicated. The following is the list of kings as they occur in the *Patiruppattu*.

1. Imayavarampan (also Kuṭavar Kōmān and Kuṭakkō) Netuñcēralātan
2. Palyanaic-celkelu-kuṭṭuvan
3. Kaḷaṅkāykkanni Nārmuṭiccēralātan
4. Kaṭalpirakkottiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvan
5. Ātukōṭpāṭṭuccēralātan
6. Celvakkatuṅkō-Vāliyaatan
7. Peruñcēral-Irumporai
8. Iḷañcēral-Irumporai

As regards their relationship the following information is available from the epilogue attached to each of the

respective eight Tens. Imayavarampan Netuñcēralātan is the son of Utiyañcēral and

Veļiyan-Vēṇmal Nallini

Palyānaic-celkeḷu-kuṭṭuvan is said to be the younger brother

of Imayavarampaṇ. Nārmuṭicceralātaṇ is the son of

Ceralātaṇ and Vēlāvikkōmaṇ Padumandevi. Senkuṭṭuvan

is said to be the son of Kuṭavarkōmaṇ-Nedumceralātaṇ and Nārcoṇai,

daughter of Cōlaṇ Maṇakkilḷi. Atukōṭpaṭṭuc-

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ceralātaṇ is the son of Kuṭakko-Neṭuṇceralātaṇ and Vēlavikkōmāntevi. Celvakkāṭuṅkō is said to be the son of Antuvaṇ and Poraiyanperuṇtevi, that is, the daughter of Orutandai or Orūutandi. Peruṇceral is the son of Celvakkāṭuṅkō and

Velāvikkōmāṇ Padumandevī. Iḷan- cēral is said to be the son of Kuṭṭuvan (Peruñcēral) Irūmporai¹ and Vēṇmāl-Antuvan Cēḷai, the daughter of Maiyūrkiḷāṇ, perhaps the minister of Iḷañcēral.²

The genealogy as mentioned in these *patikams* has made Professor S. S. Bharati draw the conclusion that Marumakkattāyam was an ancient practice of the old Cēra monarchs, and the present practice is only a relic of the ancient custom.³

As against this inference, Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar has made out a strong case and proved how the interpretation does not admit of Marumakkattāyam but only of Makkattāyam, of son succeeding father, as in the other parts of the country.⁴ The

*Cilappatikāram*⁵ mentions Vēṇmāl as the wife of the Cēra king Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, and the

full name seems to be *Ilaṅkō-vēṇmaḷ*. According to a note to the *patikam* of the fifth Ten, *Seṅkuṭṭuvan* had a son

1 *Ilaṅceral* is the son and not the brother.

The expression
is similar to *Iḷampāncapandavas* meaning, sons of the Pandavas.

2 From the *patikam* of the ninth

Ten it is seen that a certain
Maiyurkiḷāṇ was the minister of *Ilaṅceral*. The

same *patikam*
speaks of a
Maiyurkiḷāṇ as his grandfather. Either the two

Maiyurkiḷāṇs are different, or the grandfather of
Ilaṅceral was
also his minister.

3 *Centamiḷ*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4; see also

M. Srinivasa
Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*, p. 103 ff.

4 *Cēravēntartāyavalakku* in Tamil (1930); see
also 'Maru-
makkattāyam and the Sangam Literature',
No. 3, p. 255 ff.

Z. I. I., Vol. IX,

5 Canto xxv. 1. 5.

by name Kuṭṭuvancēral who was given to Parānar, the

noted Caṅkam celebrity, as a gift, in addition to other

presents. Collating all these available materials we can

arrive at a tentative genealogy of the early-
Cērās, and the

following table is drawn up for purposes of ready and easy

reference.

Paternal line of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

Utiyañcēral

Imayavarampan Netuñcēralatan	Palyānalc-celkeḷu-kuṭṭuvan
= Nārccōnai (daughter of Cōlā king Maṇakkiḷli)	

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ = Iḷaṅkō-vēnmāḷ

Kuṭṭuvancēraḷ

Maternal line of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ

Maṇakkīḷḷi (Cōḷa)

Narconai (daughter)

= Imayavarampan Netuṅcēraḷātan

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ

Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ

Kuṭṭuvancēraḷ

Maternal line of other Cērās

Vēḷavikkōmāṇ

daughter (No. 1)

daughter (No. 2)

= Imayavarampan Netuṅcēraḷātan

= Selvakkatunkō-Vaḷḷyātan

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan were con- temporaries has little to support it. Imayavaramban must have died in the early half of the second century A. D.

We know from the *Patirruppattu* that Imayavaramban and Ceṅkuṭṭuvan reigned for fifty-eight and fifty years respectively. It would appear that Imayavaramban had two queens and four sons, and one of them, Ceṅkuṭṭuvan,

was his successor. His brother Ilāṅkō-Aṭigaḷ became an ascetic. Of the other two, Narmuticcēralātan seems to have been in charge of the northern part of the Konku kingdom, the region where was the hill Nanrā,⁴ while

Ātukōṭṭāttuccēralātan was in charge of the Kuṭṭanaṭu.

The last two were princes ruling under the suzerainty of the emperor reigning from Vaṅjikkaruvūr.

For purposes of fixing the date of the epic a beginning must be made from the year A. D.

172 or 173 which is the probable year of the foundation of the Pattini temple at

1 Identified with Kōyilvenni, a village near modern Mannargudi.

2 *Akam.*, st. 55; *Puram.*, st 65 (colophon) and st. 66.

3 The term *Vatākkiruntanan* in the texts is translated 'committed suicide' by P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar in *History of the Tamils*, pp. 335-7.

4 *Patirr.*, *patikam* to the seventh Ten.

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the Cera capital; for Gajabahu, the king of Ceylon, who attended the consecration ceremony of the temple, came to

the throne only in A. D.
must have visited India

171, and we have to assume that he
after he became king. The question

of the Gajabahu synchronism has not found acceptance with the learned author of the *History of the Tamils*.¹ One argument is that the alternative reading for the word Kavavāku is Kaval, and if the latter reading were adopted, the edifice based on the Gajabahu synchronism would fall to the ground. We must emphasize the word *if*.

The editor, who has consulted no fewer than eleven manuscripts of the text and fourteen manuscript copies of the commentary, and whose scientific precision and punctillious care in collating the manuscripts cannot be questioned, has not only adopted Kayavāku as the correct reading, but has also shown how there are two Gajabahus mentioned in the *Mahavamsa* differing in age by a thousand years,² and how Gajabahu I must be the king of Ceylon mentioned in the *Varantarumkātai* as having been present.

1. p. 375, ff.

2. For an inscription of Gajabahu I, 171-193 on the elephants' stables or Ratanapāsāda, see M.A.S.C., Vol. I, No. 2. See also chronological table in B. G. Singe's translation of the second part of the *Mahavamsa* p. 20. According to this, Gajabahu II ascended the throne in A. D. 1142. Cf. M.A.S.C., Vol. II, No. 1.

Cf. Ep. Z., Vol. III, No. 1, 'Ceylonese chronology', p. 9. Also H. W. Codrington's *Short History of Ceylon*, pp. 24, 26-34; C.A., Vol. X, p. 115.

This is also the view of investigators on the subject like

Seshagiri Sastri, Kanakasabhai, Krishnaswami Aiyangar, and Nilakanta Sastri. It may be noted that Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, (*Ancient India*, p. 350) has answered the points raised by E. Hultzsch in S.I.L., Vol. II, No. 3, p. 378, with regard to this question.

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at the festivities held in honour of
Pattinikkaṭavuḷ by
Ceṅkuṭṭuvan.

The *Mahāvamsa*¹ says: 'After Vankanāsikatiss's death,

his son Gajabāhukagāmani reigned twenty-two years.'

He founded a number of *vihāras* and *stūpās*. Dr.

Wilhelm Geiger, the learned translator of the *Mahāvamsa*²

has furnished in his introduction a list of the ancient

kings of Ceylon with the length of their respective

reigns both in the Buddhist era and the Christian era.

In this list Gajabāhukagāmani figures as the forty-sixth

king, ruling from A. D. 171-193.³

This must have been the

Gajabāhu who is celebrated in the *Cilappatikāram*.

It is asked⁴ how a devout follower of the Buddha could

embrace a new cult like the Pattinī cult.
The answer is
simple. In those days the religion followed
by monarchs
was cosmopolitan in character. There was
not much of
sectarian rancour. To the people then, God
was one and
might be worshipped in any shape or form.
In the epoch
when there was no nice distinction between
the established
religion of the land and the dissenting sects
like the Jains
and the Buddhists, it is no wonder that
Gajabāhu built a
temple in honour of the Pattiṇikkatavū.
Among the
popular deities in Ceylon, Pattinī Dēvi
figures as the
guardian of female chastity. 'Two wooden
images of her

and her husband in a cave at the
Nikawaewa monastery

are supposed to date from the eleventh
century.⁵ The

most notable of the images of the goddess
Pattini Devi is

1 Canto xxxv. pp. 254-5.

2 Pali Text Society, 1912.

3 *Dipa.*, st. 22, 14 and 28.

Mahavamsa, Intro. p. xxxviii.

4 *History of the Tamils*, p. 380.

5 V. A. Smith. *A History of Fine Art in
India and Ceylon*, 1911, p. 748.

C 2

Also H. Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*, Fig. 272. 18

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an image in bronze, 4 feet 9½ inches in height,
discovered in Ceylon and presented to the
British Museum in 1830.¹ To deny totally a
tradition which receives corroboration from an

unexpected quarter, like the Pāli literature of Ceylon, and thus to shake the corner-stone of early South Indian chronology, would be a breach of the historical and critical method. For various reasons into which we need not enter here, the reference in the *Cilappatikāram* cannot be to Gajabāhu II who figures in the history of Ceylon nearly ten centuries after the time of Gajabāhu I. Thus the Gajabāhu synchronism is explained, and the date of the composition of the *Cilappatikāram* settled once for all. It was in the second half of the second century after Christ.

At that time (*circa* A. D. 172)

Cenkuṭṭuvan was fifty years of age.² Therefore, when he started for the north he was forty-seven, as he had spent three years there. In the light of the statement in the *Patirruppattu* that he ruled for fifty years, it may be taken roughly that he ascended the throne when he was twenty years of age and must have died about A. D. 192.

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan must, therefore, have led the northern expedition about A. D. 168, though these estimates cannot be accepted rigidly.

That Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

took nearly three years for his North Indian expedition is evident from the following. While he was still in the north a certain Brahman, Mātalan by name, sought the audience of His Majesty, and after his conversation with him, the royal astrologer informed him that it was thirty-two months since the latter left his

capital.¹ Again two years before Ceṅkuṭṭuvan left for the north, Maṇi-

1 See frontispiece.

2 Canto xxviii, ll. 129-30.

3 Canto xxvii, l. 149.

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mēkalai was in Pukar, and when she

returned to Vañci after a five years' tour, it is said that it was three years since Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had left for the north. Without going into further details, we may conclude that Imayavarampaṇ ruled from *circa* A. D. 80-140 and Ceṅkuṭṭuvan from *circa* A. D. 140-192.

V

CENKUTUVAN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

The fifth Ten of the *Patirruppattu* is sung in praise of

Cēraṇ Ceṅkuṭṭuvan by the poet Paraṇar. Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

became the greatest of the Cēra monarchs. From the

patikam can be gathered some knowledge as to his achieve-

ments. These can be categorically mentioned here.

(1) The success over the northern kings in his campaign to the Himalayas to get a stone

thereof to carve

out an image of the

Pattinikkaṭavuḷ.

(2) The lifting of cattle from the Iṭumbil forest tracts.

It is said that on his return from the northern expedition the king spent some time on the

outskirts of this forest.¹

(3) The defeat of Naṇṇan Venmān or simply Naṇṇan, the chieftain of the Veḷir, and the occupation of his capital Viyalūr.²

(4) The overthrow of a confederacy of nine Cōjas at

Nerivāyil³ which was near the southern gateway.

of the ancient Uraiṇūr.⁴

1 Canto xxviii, l. 118.

3 Cantos xxix, ll. 116-7; xxvii, ll. 118-23.

4 *Anc. Ind.*, p. 95; also the
commentary of Arumpata-
varaiyāciriyar on *Cila.*, canto xxviii, l. 117.

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(5) The overthrow of seven kings and
the wearing of
their respective seven garlands in
his crown in
commemoration of his heroic deed.

(6) His success over the Koṅkar² who can
be identified
with the Gangas, also called
Koṅkudecarājākkaḷ.

During this encounter Kotukūr
 was completely
 devastated as the *Patirruppattu* has
 it.³ There
 is a Kotukūrṇāṭu today in the
 division of
 Puṇṇāṭu of the Mysore state.⁴
 (7) His successful naval engagements and
 specially the
 battle of Mōkūr⁵ where the *vēmbu*⁶
 or margosa
 tree of Paḷaiyaṇ was destroyed. It
 may be noted
 in passing that his naval
 engagements were so
 striking and decisive that he earned
 the title of
 Kaṭalpiṛakkōṭṭiya Vēkelukuṭṭuvan.
 7 This can
 appropriately be compared with the
 statement⁸
 made at different places in the
Cilappatikāram.

Most of these are corroborated by the
Cilappatikāram

which gives a detailed account of
his expedition to the

1 Canto xxviii, ll. 169; *Patirrr.*, st. 45. In
these places he is

called Eḷumuṭimārpa.

2 Canto xxv, ll. 152-5.

3 *Patikam* to the fifth Ten.

4 See M. Raghava Aiyangar, *Cēraṇ
Ceṇkuṭṭuvan*, pp. 28-9;

also *Ind. Ant.*, 1889, p. 369.

5 Canto xxvii, ll. 124-6. *Patirrr.*, st. 44, 49.

6 The reference to
the wearing of the garland of margosa
goes to prove that Mōkūr Palaiyaṇ was an ally
of the Pāṇṭyan
king and more probably a general of his.

(*Maturaiikkāñci*. ll.

507-8. *Akam.*, st. 346).

7 *Patirrr.*, st. 41, 45, 46.

8 e. g. முந்நீரி னுன்புக்கு முவாக் கடம்
பெறிந்தான் canto

xvii, 'Uḷvarivāḷttu', 3. See canto xxviii, 1. 135; canto xxix, 'Ucal-vari', st. 1.

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forth to secure a block of stone to make the image of the Goddess of Chastity, and if we are to believe the account in the epic, this was the last of his achievements; for Māṭalaṇ has drawn attention¹ to all the six achievements mentioned above.

The poet Paraṇar refers to five of these seven achievements. The two, which are not mentioned by him, are his northern expedition to get a stone for the Pattinī, and his success at the battle of Nērivāyil. If we place his achievements in chronological order these two were his last, and the northern expedition was the last of all. It would be appropriate to say that when Paraṇar sang of this Cēra, he had not undertaken these things. These deeds were done after Paraṇar sang the *Patirruppattu*. From the absence of any mention

by Paraṇar of these last two of his achievements, an endeavour has been made to distinguish Vēlkeḷukuṭṭuvan from Ceṇkuṭṭuvan.² And in this the correspondence of the five incidents, which marked the earlier activities of the king, has been ignored, with what valid reasons we cannot see. In the writer's opinion, Vēlkeḷukuṭṭuvan is another name for Ceṇkuṭṭuvan.

VI

AN ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER

Bold and powerful, Ceṇkuṭṭuvan was able to bring under his control not only his own neighbours, the Pāṇṭya and the Cōḷa, but also to carry his conquest so far north as to earn the title of Imayavarampaṇ (literally 'one, the territorial limits of whose empire extended to the Himalayas'). We know his father had carried his arms up to the distant Himalayas and hence came to be

distinguished as Iṁayavarampaṇ Neṭuññāralāṭaṇ. Already mention has been made of the achievements which Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ had to his credit, and which entitle him to be ranked with the great emperors of Ancient India. We shall here call attention to a few outstanding traits of his character.

The rather horrid detail of his having made the women-

folk of Paḷaiyaṇ drag the margosa tree with a rope made

of their twisted hair¹ may be dismissed as a poetic exag-

geration, though there may be truth in the statement that

he made the northern kings carry the stone for the Pattinī

on their heads. These details and especially the fact of

his making prisoners of the vanquished and the retreating

foes, which evoked scathing comments from the Pāṇṭya

and the Cōḷa sovereigns of his time, go to prove that

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ was too severe an avenger of wrongs. The

above incidents smack of the *asura* form of warfare so

eloquently described in the *Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra*.².

Notwithstanding these incidents we find the king to be

God-fearing and possessing a religious bent of mind. He was superstitious and had faith in astrology and astronomy.

This is borne out by the fact that he set out on his nor-

thern expedition at an auspicious hour.

That he was reli-

gious is seen from his prayers in the temples of Civa and

Viṣṇu on the eve of his historic march to the north.²

Besides, he was a patron of arts and letters. He

spent his time in amusements which consisted of dancing

and singing. It is said that a number of these dancers

went along with him to the north. That this was an 1 *Patikam* to the fifth Ten.

2 For details see *Ar. Sās.* Bk. xii, §1; also V. R. R. Dik-

shitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, 1932, p. 129.

3 Canto xxvi, ll. 54-66.

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ancient war-practice is seen from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, where it is said that actors and dancing-masters followed the army of Satrughna.¹ He rewarded learned men with presents, some of which

were invaluable. The gifts received by Paranar and Mātalaṇ may be quoted as instances in point. Ceṇkuṭṭuvaṇ had a fine artistic mind as is seen from the fact that he went all the way to the Himalayas in order to fetch a good stone to carve out an image of Kaṇṇaki.* That he was a follower of the established religion of the land and that he was Kṣatriya by caste are evident from the fact that he engaged himself in the performance of Vedic sacrifices, after the temple was constructed and consecrated to Kaṇṇaki. From this time until his death it appears that he took to a life of ease and peace, penance and prayer, his mind being centred on the study and practice of *dharma*.*

He was a great soldier and a bold warrior. The prowess of his arms was felt throughout the Tamil land, the Cōḷa and Pāṇṭya being his tributary allies. He carried his sword as far as the Ganges, and

brought the

whole of India under his suzerainty. According to the *Harihara Caturanga*, a manuscript on War written by the minister of Pratāparudra, the Kabanda engages in a dance, usually known as the devil dance, whenever a thousand *śūras* fall dead on the field of battle, or when a *śūra* kills one thousand able heroes in a battle. Viewed in this light, and from the fact that the Kabanda danced his dance in glee, blessing Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ for the sumptuous food for him and his companions, it transpires that Ceṅ- kuttuvaṇ was a *śūra* and a *vīra*. With unlimited power at his disposal and being a vigorous ruler, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ

1 Bk. vii, ch. 64, st. 3.

2 Canto xxv, ll. 115-31.

3 Canto xxx, ll. 170 ff.

was able to keep peace in
for a full half-century.

his vast and diversified empire
This would in itself be ample
proof of his greatness. No doubt he is the
most memorable figure in the history of ancient
Tamil India.

VII

KARIKĀLA IN THE CILAPPATIKĀRAM

Another king much celebrated by Ilankō-Aṭikaḷ next
only to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, is the Cōḷa king Karikāla. - If we
are to believe the account in the *Poruṇarāruppaṭai*¹

Karikāla was a posthumous child and son
of Uruvap-

pahrēr-Iḷaṅcetcenni. He began to reign
when he was

a mere child. It is said that in the battle of

Venni, Ima-

yavarampaṇ was wounded and the victory was won by

the boy Karikāla.³ His was a benevolent form of admini-

stration.³ His interest in irrigation and consequently in

agriculture is seen from his construction of embankments

for the Kāveri as testified to by the Leyden grant,⁴ For

this work, it is said that thousands of Ceylonese labourers

were employed.

The text of the *Cilappatikāram* contains three refer-

ences to Karikāla.⁵ The first reference is to his military

proWess. Here he is called Tirumāvaḷavan, which term,

it is worthy of note, occurs in the *Paṭṭinappālai* (1. 299) of Kaṭṭiyālūr

Uruttirankannanār who was the recipient
of 16,00,000 gold pieces at the hands
of Karikāla

(ll. 19-21). This internal evidence
establishes beyond
doubt the contemporaneity of the poet
and the king,

1 ll. 130-48.

2 *Akam.*, st. 246; of *Maṇi.*, canto iv, ll. 107-8.

3 *Paṭṭinappālai*, ll. 283-4.

4 J. Burgess and Natesa Sastri, *Tam.*

and *Sans.*, *Ins.*, No.

29. pp. 204-24. See also *Anc. Ind.*, p. 349.

5

Cantos v, ll. 90-104; vi, ll. 159-60; xxi, l. 11 ff.

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a chief plank in determining the date of
Karikāla. The second reference gives him the

full name of Karikālyala-vaṇ by which term the *Puranānūru* 66 mentions him. In the third reference in the text referred to above, we have the story of Karikāla's daughter who, finding her husband, the ruler of Vañci, being washed away by the floods, plunged courageously into the waters and rescued him by the power of her chasity. It is unfortunate that we have no more details about this incident, not even the names of that daughter and her husband.

An instance of his military prowess can be said to be the carving of the bow emblem on the Himalayas and the consequent overthrowing of the Arya monarchs of the north. This march was prompted by the fact of the intrusion of the northern kings into South India. As if to corroborate this statement the *Cilappatikāram* elsewhere evidences the fact that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ was an ally of Avantī (Ujjain in Mālva), and of the kings of Vajra and Maga-dha. We have records, literary and epigraphical, which testify to such

invasions during the epoch of the Nandas and the Mauryas. There was a reaction. Powerful southern kings like Karikāla, Iṃayavarambaṇ Neṭuñ- cāralāṇ and Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ led expeditions to the north and their unqualified victories stemmed the tide of political invasions from the north for the time being ; for we know Samudragupta carried his victorious arms to the very south. The extant commentaries on the epic regard Karikāla as the contemporary of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ, the hero of the Vaṇjikkāṇṭam of the epic. The commentators say that the Cōla king under reference in the Pukār-kāṇṭam and even later was Karikālaccōlaṇ.¹ But this militates against the indications furnished by the text of the *Cilappatikāram*. That a certain king by name Kari-

1 *Arumpatavurai*, canto iii, l. II; also gloss of kunallār on cantos i, ll. 65-8, v, l. 212, and vi, l. 15.

kāla lived, and that he was an ancient monarch is testified to us by the anthologies of the *Puranānūru* and the *Akanānūru*, besides other Caṅkam works. Here are celebrated the achievements of the Cōla Karikāla, and if we compare these achievements with those referred to in the *Cilappatikāram*, it is just possible that the Cōla under reference is no other than Karikāla.

In describing the two achievements of Karikāla—the march to the Himalayas, and the festival of bathing in the first freshes¹ of the Kāvēri, the poet refers to them as past incidents by the significant expression *annā!*, making us infer that Karikāla lived a little before the epic was composed, and not very far removed from the date of its composition. The next question arises as to who this Karikāla was, and what was his relationship to Ceraṇ Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. In the *patikam*, the prologue

to the poem, Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's mother is said to be a daughter of the Cōla king, and her name was Nār̥cōṇai. According to the *Paṭirruppattu* (the fourth Ten) there was one Cōla Maṇakkīḷi. His daughter must be the mother of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan and her name was Nār̥cōṇai. Maṇakkīḷi in his turn must have been the son of Karikāla. In the light of this relationship, Karikāla must have been the maternal great-grandfather of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan and not his grandfather as some scholars would have it. If the latter relationship can be accepted, Maṇakkīḷi would stand by himself, and it would be difficult to find for him a proper place in the genealogical list. Hence it stands to reason that Karikāla must have lived a generation before the age of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, and could not therefore have been his contemporary.²

1 Canto vi, ll. 159-60.

2 Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in his learned study of

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Incidentally, we may remark that the Karikāla of the *Cilappatikāram* or of the Caṅkam works has nothing to do with the Karikāla represented to be a contemporary of Trilōcana Pallava and Cāḷukya Vijayāditya of the early fifth century A.D.¹ It is still a moot question who this Trilōcana was and when he lived.² Even if his date and identity were established, and there is no reliable testimony to establish it, there is nothing to prevent another Karikāla having flourished in Pukār a few centuries later. If the reference in the *Akanāṇūru*³ has any significance at all, it shows, as has already been said, the contemporaneity of Iṃayavarampaṇ Neṭuñceralātaṇ and Karikāla. Though we cannot definitely mark out the chronological limits of Karikāla's career, it is reasonable to assume that he lived at the commencement of the second century A. D. It seems to be certain that at the accession of

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan to the Cēra throne (*circa* A. D. 140) Karikāla was dead, and Maṇakkiṇi was reigning. For, according to the account preserved in the *Cilappatikāram*,

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had to

interfere in the disputed election to the throne of the Cōlas,⁴ and it needs no stretch of the imagination to deduce that this was the consequence of the death of Maṇakkiṇi's son. The conclusion is irresistible that the duration of the reigns of Karikāla and Maṇakkiṇi was comparatively

thoroughly realistic and historical, and indicates his view that

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan came at least half a century after Karikāla, if not earlier. (*Studies* 49-50.)

in *Cōla History and Administration*, pp. 37.

1 *Contra* P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, *History of the Tamils*, pp. 382-7; Dr. N. V. Ramanayya, *Trilōcana Pallava*.

2 For Krishna Sastri's opinion, see, *Ep.* 58, n; 2.

3 St. 55.

4 Canto xxvii, ll. 118-23.

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CILAPPATIKARAM

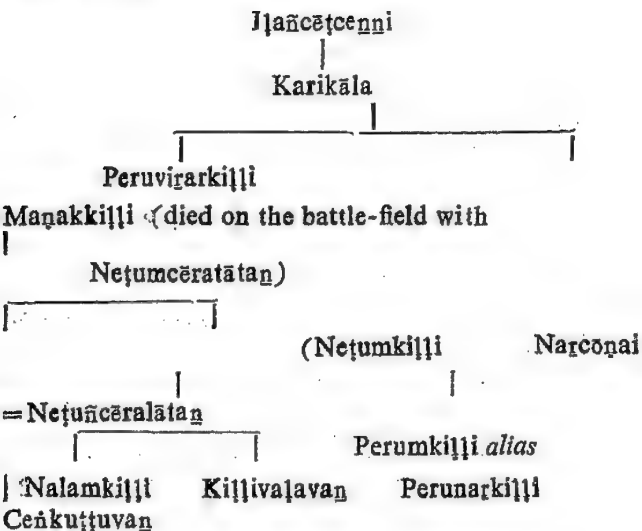
short. According to the evidence cited by the *Uraiperu-katturai* it was Perumkiṭṭi or Perunarkiṭṭi that succeeded

Maṇackiṭṭi, or probably his son Neḍumkiṭṭi, and was reign-

ing at Uraiyyūr at the time of the consecration of the Pattinī temple.

From this foregoing evidence the following genealogical list of the early Cōlas of the first and second centuries A. D.

can be drawn.



VIII

THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF NORTH INDIA

The *Cilappatikāram* also gives an insight into the political condition of North India in the first

three centuries of the Christian era. This was the dark period of Indian History so far as North India was concerned. But the recent researches of Dr. K. P. Jayaswal in his *History of India A. D. 150-350*, have shed much light and lifted up the veil of gloom. It was only under the Guptas that North India regained its old position of prestige and pre-eminence. During that period, which extended for more than two centuries, there was no towering personality of prowess and valour to meet a strong foe.

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like Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, The whole region was divided into a number of petty principalities over each of which was a chieftain. It is said that there were as many as one

thousand chieftains whom Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had to encounter single-handed.¹ Though this number is an exaggeration, it demonstrates that there were a good number of small and independent states. Apparently, these different chiefs were enjoying autonomy. The principal kingdoms mentioned in the epic were Avanti, Vajra, Magadha and Mālva.² We know by their gifts of choice presents that the first three acknowledged the overlordship of Karikāla. The king of Mālva was an ally of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. Some of them became jealous of the arms of the neighbouring monarchs. Hearing that a south Indian king like the powerful Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was advancing towards their kingdoms; some of the prominent minor rulers, Uttiran, Vicit-tiraṇ, Uruttiraṇ, Bairavaṇ, Cittiraṇ, Ciṅkaṇ, Tanuttiraṇ, and Sivētaṇ, joined together under the common leadership Kaṇaka and Vijaya, and went to meet Ceṅkuṭṭu-vaṇ encamped far from the north of the Ganges.³ The scene of action mentioned

is Kuyilāluvam.

The political situation in the north was quite favourable to the South Indian conqueror. The Āndhrās were in the position of allies.

Kaṇiṣka, the other powerful king, was already dead. The smaller chieftains were not strong enough

to offer a bold front to the strong arms of a conquering monarch like Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. The result was a crushing defeat

for the northerners. Excepting those who had been slain and who had fled from the field of battle in fear and in different disguises, other important leaders were captured as prisoners of war, taken to the

1 Canto xxv, ll. 160-6

2 Canto v, ll. 99 ff.

3 Canto xxvi, ll. 180-6.

-distant south as a mark of humiliation, and thrown into

prison after being shown to
Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's brother-
monarchs, the Pāṇtya and the Cōḷa.

It would not be out of place to refer here to the

Yavana-nāḍu and the Mālva region which find mention

in the *Cilappatikāram*. According to the *patikam* of the

second Ten of the *Patirruppattu*,
Imayavarambaṇ put the

Yavanas to disgrace by pouring ghee over their heads.

The Yavanas are mentioned frequently in Tamil litera-

ture including the *Cilappatikāram*.¹ These

were origin-

ally foreign traders with whom the Tamils had commer-

cial transactions. But by the time of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan they

had settled in India and, according to the *Cilappatikāram*,

had their own flourishing and independent *nāṭu*, pro-

bably the Indus region.² They seem to have been very

wealthy for diamonds formed part of the tribute paid

by them. It appears that they acknowledged the over-

lordship of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan by paying tribute to him.

Mention is again made of the aid given by Nūrruvar-

Kannar. The late Mr. Kanakasabhai identified them with

the Śatakarni.⁸ According to the version in the epic these

were apparently a class of people having their residence

in the Ganges tracts.

It is said that they helped Cen-

kuṭṭuvan with boats to cross the Ganges.⁴

The context

does not warrant it to be the action of a particular indivi-

dual but a group of persons.

If the reference is to a certain

Śātakarṇi⁵ it must be Śiva Śri Pulumāyi (A. D. 163-170),

1 Canto xxix, 'Ucalvari st. 3; and canto xxviii, l. 141.

2 See in this connection V. A. Smith,

The Early History of

India. 4th ed., revised by S. M. Edwardes, 1924. pp. 462-3.

3 *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, p. 7.

4 Canto xxvi, l. 176.

5 According to Pandit M.

Raghava Aiyangar, the king of

Malva is under reference
especially from the fact that he was

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In fact the neutrality or rather the alliance of the Andhrās was a preliminary condition for the success of the northern expedition of the Cēra monarch. That the Āndhrās conquered Magadha and established an All-India empire cannot be gainsaid. Light comes from an unexpected quarter which helps us to identify Bālakumāra and Vijaya. In this connection Ptolemy's reference to Baleokourous is of capital importance. Baleokourous is perhaps a corrupt form of Bālakumāra. Him Ptolemy refers to as a contemporary ruling prince about A. D. 160. From the fact the Bālakumāra belonged to a collateral line of the Āndhrās it can be inferred that he was an ally of

Cenkuṭṭuvan. A certain Śatakarṇi was the imperial ruler at this time, He was perhaps Yajñaśri Śatakarṇi or Pulumāyi. According to the account of the *Matsya Purāṇa*, Yajñaśri was succeeded by Vijaya, a usurper. If we are to believe the epic account, this Vijaya was the son of Bālakumara. What is remarkable is the coincidence of dates, which fixes Cenkuṭṭuvan in the latter half of the second century A. D.¹

Before we close this section attention may be drawn to the futile attempt made by some scholars to identify Kaṇaka and Vijaya with Kaṇiṣka and Vijayakīrti of Khotan. According to Tibetan sources, shortly after A. D. 120, an expedition against India was undertaken by Kanika in connection with Vijayakīrti king of Khotan and the king of Guzan. This Kanika is identified with Kaṇiṣka; but as Prof. F. W. Thomas points out² this is in conflict with Tāranātha's statement. According to the

present at the installation of the Pattinṭṭēvi. (For a temple of Pattinṭ in E. Mālva, see T. G. Aravamudan, *The Kāvēri, the*

Professor, Kaniska lived in the Mauryan epoch. If on the other hand, Kaniska is identified with king Kanika, then Kanika 'must have started on his career from the Khotan country'. The evidence of the *Kalpanāmaṇḍiṭṭikā* and of the *Mahārājakanikalēkha* points in the same direction. It is also to be noted that at the time of the expedition of Vijayakirti to India, the ruling prince in Khotan was Vijayasimha. Last but not least is the tradition that Kaniska left India after his conquest and went back to Khotan. Excepting the accidental identity of the names Kanaka and Vijaya, other events connected with them have no bearing on the historical data furnished by the *Cilappatikāram*.¹ Vāsiṣka had succeeded² Kaniska in A. D. 152. If Chinese historical sources which mention the history of western countries down to A. D. 125 are to be believed, we have to take it that Kaniska rose to

power after A. D. 125; for he is not mentioned in the

Chinese books. It is impossible by any stretch

of imagina-

tion for a Khotan prince to invade, conquer India up to

the Ganges—for according to the *Cilappatikāram* the

battle was fought on the banks of the Ganges—and to found an empire. It could not stop with this. Having firmly established himself, he heard of the distant

Tamil kings and spoke slightly of their prowess. All

this in the course of less than twenty-five years is an

impossibility. Hence this identification cannot stand a critical examination.

IX

THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF SOUTH INDIA

From the foregoing account we have a rough estimate

of the political condition of the Tamil land at the begin-

1 C. I. I., Vol. II, Pt. I, 1929, 'Kharoshthi Inscriptions',

According to inscripational evidence; *ibld.* p. lxxviii.

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ning of the Christian era. The three powerful kings were the Cēra, the Cōla, and the Pāṇṭya. The Pallavas of Kāñci were yet to come. Wars among these states were frequent. Often two kingdoms joined together against the third.

THE CĒRA KINGDOM

In the section on geographical data an attempt has been made to locate the *nāṭas* of the ancient Cēra king- dom. These were

broadly classified into the *malainātu* and the *kaṭalmalainātu*. The *malainātu* (literally, mountainous country) was the Konkunātu, a part of which comprised the territory now occupied by the Salem and Coimbatore districts. Here was the famous capital city Vañcikkaruvūr. Here the Kollis and the Ānamalai range are the chief hills, and it may be remarked in passing that the Ānamalais are said to contain lofty peaks. The districts of Malayāḷa (the territory covering modern Malabar) were known as *kaṭalmalainātu* (region of seas and mountains). Here the chief divisions were Kuṭṭanātu,¹ Kuṭanātu and the Pūlinātu. The term *kuṭṭa* means lowlands and apparently the reference is to the backwaters of the Malabar region. Probably it extended from Cranganore to modern Trivandrum. The Kuṭanātu covered the territory from opposite the Palghat gap to South Kanara and

(literally, small hilly

Coorg. The region of the Poraiyan, tracts), extended from Palghat to the Konkunāṭu proper.

The Cēra king was known generally as Kuṭavar- kōmān or the lord of the western region. His other titles were Kuṭṭuvan, Konkan, Pūliyan, Poraiyan, etc. This extensive Cēra kingdom, infested here and there by lofty hills, could not have been ruled directly by the cen-

1 *Patirr.*, glossary, p. 168.

C—3

tral authority. If we analyse the available data, the inference forces itself on us that these different *nāṭus* were the various divisions of the empire, each division under the charge of a governor or viceroy who was appointed by and who owed allegiance to the Cēra king reigning at Vañcīk-karuvār. From the nature of the materials before us, it is not possible to say when these *nāṭus* were conquered and by whom. But at the time when the *Cilappatikāram* was composed, or even long before it, these *nāṭus* formed part and parcel of the Cēra kingdom. By extending their mighty empire, the Cēras occasionally earned the titles of Pukār-Celva and Imayavarampa. The Cēra state had international relations, or more appropriately inter-state relations, not only with its immediate neighbours, but also with distant rulers. The enemy kings were conquered, and often their states were annexed. Sometimes the defeated monarchs were reinstated under certain conditions. At the time of which we are speaking, the Cēra kingdom was the most powerful and the most wealthy of the Tamil kingdoms.

THE CŌLA KINGDOM

At the commencement of the story in the *Cilappati-kāram*, the ruler of the Cōla kingdom was Kuṇavar-

kōmān, and the kingdom had two capitals Urai-yūr and Pukār. The ruler of Urai-yūr was Maṇakkiḷi or more probably his son Neṭuṇkiḷi. According to the *Maṇi-mēkalai*, Mavaṇkiḷi or Kiḷivaḷavan was the ruler of Pukār. His younger brother was Iḷaṇkiḷi (also Nalaṇkiḷi).

Pukār

There was a civil war between the Urai-yūr and Kiḷis. The most important battle was fought at Kariyāru where Neṭuṇkiḷi was slain by Iḷaṇkiḷi. Neṭuṇkiḷi, it may be remembered, was the uncle of Ceṇkuṭṭuvan, and he had a son Peruṇkiḷi or Perunaṇkiḷi.

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The succession was disputed, and Ceṇkuṭṭuvuan had to interfere. In this connexion he had to overthrow a confederacy of nine Cōlas, and ultimately he succeeded in enthroning his uncle's son Peruṇkiḷi.

From this it is

reasonable to assume that, besides the two capitals, there

were other small semi-independent states within the Cōḷa

kingdom where minor chieftains reigned, but all of whom

acknowledged the overlordship of the Cōḷa at the capital.

It is worthy of note that the Cōḷamaṇṭalam extended as

far as Kāñci, which belonged to Karikāla as provided

by independent testimony.¹

The importance of Pukār was not long-lived. Anticipa-

ting the forthcoming devastation of the city, the Būta at

the Būtacatukkam, which was brought from Indra's

abode by Mucukunta, was removed to Vañci by the Cēra

king². The destruction of Pukār by the erosion of the sea was effected during the period between the time when Maṇimēkalai left Pukār on a tour to Maṇipallavam and other places, and her return after nearly five years. This was probably in the year A. D. 170. Notwithstanding the ruin of the city, Pukār continued to be the capital, though diminished in importance. Once more Uraiṃyūr rose to prominence as the chief seat of the Cōla monarchs. At the time of the establishment of the Kaṇṇaki temple at Vañci, the Cōla ruler was Perunarkilī (also Peruṅkilī)³ who also had a temple built for her at Uraiṃyūr, his capital.

THE PĀṆṬYAN KINGDOM

Proceeding to speak about the
Pāṇṭyan kingdom,
Madura was flourishing as the capital of
Āriyappaṭai-

1 *Maṇi.*, canto xxviii, ll. 168-72.

2 *Sila.*, Canto xxviii, ll. 147-8.

3 *Uraipeṟukaṭṭurai*, l. 4.

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katanta Neṭuñceliyaṇ¹. It was a busy centre
of trade and

commerce and attracted even people like
Kōvalaṇ and

Kaṇṇaki. But the city was not to flourish long. Neṭuñ-
celiyaṇ ordered the unjust execution of the innocent
Kōvalaṇ and this cost the king's life and the destruction
of the city. The ancient Pāṇṭyan kingdom
had another

capital at Korkai. From the *Uraiperukatturai* it is seen

that at Korkai, was reigning Verriverceliyan (also Iḷaṇceliyan) at the time when Cenkuṭṭuvan was in the north. Iḷaṇceliyan was the younger brother of Āriyappaṭaikatanta-Netuṇceliyan or simply Naṭuṇceliyan. The latter was a man of letters,² and was a patron of literature. During

his reign, Korkai was the seat of the Yuvarāja who was

the king's own brother. The latter was crowned king

while Cenkuṭṭuvan was absent in the north³. Finding

his country suffering from a disastrous famine, he ordered the sacrifice of a thousand goldsmiths as an offering in

honour of the Goddess of Chastity installed in his capital.

He was also known as Verriverceliyan.⁴ It is believed

that after he became king he took the title of

Nanmāraṇ-

Nanmāraṇ had a son Neṭuñceḷiyaṇ of
Talaiyālankāṇam

fame and a grandson of Ukkirapperuvaḷuti.⁵
This Peru-

vaḷuti with the attribute *Kāṇappērtanta* was
a friend and

contemporary of Perunaṅkiḷi

Cera Mārivenkō.³

(Rājasūyamvēṭṭa) and the

1 *Kaṭṭurai* at the end of the 'Maturaikkāṇṭam'; also
Āriyappataikatanta Neṭuñceḷiyaṇ.

2 See his verse in *Puṇam*, st. 183.

3 Canto xxvii, ll. 114-38.

4 *ibid.*, ll. 127-34.

5 *Puṇam*, st. 76 ff; *Akam*, st. 36.

Cf. the *Sinṇamanūr*
copper-plate.

6 *Puṇam*, st. 367 where the poetess
Avvaiyār celebrates
these three kings.

OTHER KINGDOMS

In the above outline of the political condition of South India mention has been made of the three chief Tamil kingdoms. But a study of the Caṅkam works, especially the *Puranānūru* and the *Akanānūru*, points to a number of petty kingdoms ruled by chieftains of minor importance besides these three major kingdoms. There is not enough material to deal in detail with these chiefs. But a reference has to be made to the Koṅkiḷaṅkōcar, or simply the Kōcar, whose country went by the name of Tuḷu-nāṭu;¹ and these Kōcar can be identified with the Satyaputras of the Acōkan inscriptions.² According to the testimony of literature, there was one Koṅkunāṭu which seems to have been comprised of the Cēra kingdom, the Tuḷunāṭu, and the country of Gangar and Kaṭṭiyar.

Our investigation would be incomplete if we did not mention other countries and peoples, mostly of South India, which were antagonistic to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. These are the Kaliṅkar, the Karunāṭar the Bangalar the Gangar, and the Kaṭṭiyar.⁸

The Kaliṅkar were the people of Kaliṅka, whose history can be traced back by independent testimony to the later Vedic and epic periods. It continued to be a powerful kingdom during the time of the Nandas and the Mauryas. We get a glimpse of the ancient history of Kaliṅka in the *Cilappatikāram*. There were two famous

1 *Akam*, st. 15.

2 See paper by V. R. R. Dikshitar on 'The Kośar' read to the All-India Oriental Conference, Patna, 1930, also his article in *Indian Culture*, Vol. I, Pt.

I., Calcutta, 1934; also in Pt. III, the contribution entitled 'Who were the Satyaputras?'.
3 Canto xxv, ll. 156-7.

cities, Ciṅkapura¹ and Kapilapura, ruled over respectively by Vasu and Kumara, of cognate relationship. Civil wars between them were common.²

The Karunāṭar, on the other hand, were the Kaṇṇaṭa people who are described as being hard-hearted and fierce. Karunāṭu means elevated country. Possibly the reference is to the people who occupied the plateau which was above sea-level. It may possibly refer to the region now occupied by the Mysore country.³ The Caṅkam literature knows again of a people called Vaṭukar who are also partly identified with the Kanarese people and partly

with the Telugus. The term simply means 'people of the north' and hence must be the north of Tamiḷakam. Who the Bangalar were it is difficult to say; but it may be that they were the people of Bengal. We know from the Buddhist legends that there was intercourse by sea between Bengal and Ceylon at least from the fifth century B.C. when Vijaya is said to have landed here. It is reasonable to suppose that the route lay through the Coromandel coast. No doubt its effects were felt by the Tamil countries as well. The Gangar can be said to be the people of Gangavāṭi whose capital was Talakad. The Kaṭṭiyar are often mentioned in the Caṅkam works,* and they seem to have occupied the territory lying to the south of the Vaṭukarpūmi. Apparently these were small chieftains who enjoyed independent rule. During the days of the

I. R. D.

Bannerji relates a legend that led to the foundation of Cīṅkapura which became the capital of northern

Kaliñka. He is inclined to identify this city with the village of Singur in the Hooghly district of SW. Bengal. *History of Orissa*, Vol. I, p. 49.

2 Canto xxiii, l. 138 ff.

See also *Mañi.*, canto xxvi, l. 15 ff. 3 For the derivation of Karunāṭar see *Mysore Gazetteer*, Vol. I, pp. 254-7.

4 *Akam.*, st. 44 and 226, and *Kuruntokai*,

st. 11.

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Vijayanagar empire their descendants were ruling over the territory now occupied by the Salem district.¹

CEYLON

The mention of Gajabāhu, the king of Ceylon, as

having been present at the installation ceremony of the

Goddess of Chastity is significant from more than one

standpoint. It shows the frequent intercourse between

Ceylon and South India. According to the *Makāvamca*

the invasions by Tamil kings into the kingdom of Ceylon

were pretty frequent, and were resented by the Ceylonese.

We hear of an old woman complaining to Gajabāhu that

among the 12,000 persons taken away by Karikāla for

making an embankment on the Kāveri, was her only son.

Notwithstanding this, the Ceylon king's relations with

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan were cordial. As became an ally, he was

present at the celebration of his
'victorious march to North
India. 'South India and Ancient
Ceylon' is a fascinat-
ing subject of study for a student of
South Indian History,
and it is hoped that a fuller treatment
of the subject will
be undertaken in the future.'²

X

SOME FEATURES OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Long and laborious research in
ancient Indian polity
has tended to remove the
misconception generally preva-
lent that all ancient Indian monarchies
were autocracies.

The consensus of opinion among
scholars of the modern
day is that the ancient Indian
monarchs were not auto-
cratic, but were subject to the laws

of the land both

customary and statutory. There were democratic insti-

1 See M. Raghava Aiyangar,
Cēraṇ Ceṇkuṭṭuvan, pp. 112-3.

2 An attempt has already been made by
Mr. C. Rasanayagam
in this direction in his book *Ancient Jaffna*,
1926.

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CILAPPATIKARAM

tutions in the country which kept the king
under control

and prevented him from acting unduly on his
own initia-

tive. Such institutions were common
both in North

India and South India.²

But confining ourselves to South Indian polity we may

make the statement that the king was benevolent and

cared for the promotion of the welfare of his subjects.

We know how the Cōḷa king Karikāla converted jungles

into regions of fertility and wealth and how he under-

took large irrigation schemes. There are stories told of

his even-handed justice.² So was known the Pāṇṭyan

Neṭuñceliyaṇ who gave up his life when he heard that he

had meted out unjustifiable punishment to the innocent

Kōvalaṇ. These instances are enough to prove that the

king was no autocrat.

ASSEMBLIES

In the conduct of his administration

the king was assist-

ed by the assembly of five (*aimperum-kuḷu*)
which consist-

ed of the minister, the *purōhita*, the
commander-in-chief,

an ambassador and a spy, and by a group of
eight officials

(*enpērāyam*), the superintendent of the
accounts, the head

of the executive, the officer of the treasury,
the chamber-

lain, the representatives

of the citizens, the commander,
the chief of the

warriors.³

elephant-warriors and of the horse-

I

For an elaborate study of these institutions see V. R.
R.

Dikshitar, *Hindu Administrative Institutions*, 1929.

2 *Palamoli*, st. 6; *Maṇi*, canto iv, ll. 107-8.

3 Cantos iii, l. 126;
v, l. 157; xxvi, l. 38. Also *Maṇi.*, canto
i, l. 17.

The *eṇpērāyam* is also interpreted in a
different way as
eṇperumuṇaiṇar (*Tamil Lexicon*, Vol. I, p. 520).
These were professional people who catered
for the needs of the royal household.

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To illustrate; King Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ was
served by Villa-
vaṅkōtai, the commander of the land forces,
and Aḷumbil-
vēl, the superintendent of income and
expenditure.
Saṅcaya and Nīla were the chief messengers.
Saṅcaya was

the head of the Kaṇcuka-mākkaḷ. The spies
are described

as wandering in different disguises in the
capitals of the
other kingdoms while the spies of other kings
were going

about in Vañci. The king consulted his
officials before

he undertook any business. That the
queen attended such a council and had her
say in the questions debated

upon can be presumed from the fact that
Ceṇkuṭṭuvan's

queen Iḷankōvēṇmāḷ was present in the
Council Cham-

ber and took part in the discussion when the
question of

erecting the temple to Ptatiṇi Tēvi was
decided.¹ The

monotony of state business was often
enlivened by dan-

cing and music by the class of Cākkaiyar
whose head was

Kūttuḷpaṭuvōṇ³. The kingship was generally hereditary.³

and the king reigned according to the laws of the land.

As has been pointed out already the theory of Maru-

makkattāyam as prevalent among the Cēras is not sup-

ported by the *Cilappatikāram*. On the other hand its

evidence nullifies any such theory. The king knew the

evil effects of tyrannical rule⁴ and hence endeavoured to

do justice.

FLAGS, ETC

The three kings of the Tamil land had as their respec-

tive standards, the bow, the fish, and the tiger. They

We hear Mātari the cowherdess saying that she had to send ghee

to the palace the next day (canto xvii, l. 7)

- 1 Cantos xxv, ll. 107-14; xxviii, l. 50.
- 2 Canto xxvi, l. 125.
- 3 Canto xxvii, l. 134.
- 4 *Maṇi.*, canto vii, l. 12.

were further distinguished by garlands of palmyra, mar-gosa, and *atti* leaves and flowers. We search the texts in vain for a national flag, for politically India was then divided into many nations each called after the name of their respective tribes.

CONDUCT TOWARDS PRINCES

Refractory sons were severely dealt with. The ex-

amples of Manuṇṭikaṇṭa Cōla, and Kiṇṇivaṭavan are fur-

nished by the epic. When it was feared that some prince

would stand in the way of the legitimate heir succeeding.

to the throne, the former took to a life of renunciation.

Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikai, the brother of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, is a case in point.

INTERREGNUM

Sometimes it so happened that there was an interval

between the decease of the reigning king and the appoint-

ment of his successor. This was what happened at the

death of Neṭuñceḷiyan by the curse of Kaṇṇaki. Then

the council was in charge of the kingdom till Iḷaṅceḷiyan,

the Imperial Viceroy at Korkai, was elected to the throne.¹

ROYAL AMUSEMENTS

Among the royal amusements were dancing and music

by professionals.

The king often retired to what may

be called a pleasure resort,
ilavantikaippaḷḷi. He was
 generally accompanied there by his queen. It
 is said that
 Ceṅkuṭṭuvan spent some time in that park in
 the company
 of his queen *Iḷaṅkōvēṇmāl*.²

1 Canto xxvii, ll, 132-8.

2 Cantos x, l. 31; xxv, l. 4.

INTRODUCTION RELEASE OF PRISONERS

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Among the festivities of the state
 figured the king's
 birthday. It is called *Perunāl* (also
Perumaṅkalam) when there was a general
 release of prisoners. Such general
 amnesty was also granted on other similar
 occasions. For
 example, on the occasion of the founding of
 the temple of Pattinī Tēvi, Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

ordered the release of prisoners.¹

TULĀBĀRADĀNAM

The *tulābāradānam* was a redeeming feature of the royal festivities. It was a gift of gold to the deserving, generally a *srōtriya*, equal to the donor's weight. It figures as one of the sixteen *mahādānas* as prescribed by the Purāṇas like the *Matsya* and the *Linga Purāṇas*.² It is said the Ceṅkuṭṭuvan made this gift to the Brahman Māṭalan³ on the banks of the Ganges after he had had the stone intended for the image of Kaṇṇaki bathed in the sacred river.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

The department of finance was under the control of a body of officials who went by the name Kāvitiṁakkaḷ. Perhaps the Kaviti was the chief finance minister who looked after the collection of revenues in the right season and in the proper way. He was one of the

five officials whose advice was sought on questions of state finance by the king. His establishment went by the name *āyak-kaṇakkar*,⁴ which, it is said, announced a remission of taxes when the temple of Kaṇṇaki was founded.

1 Canto xxviii, ll. 204-5.

2 See V. R. R. Dikshitar, *Matsya Purāṇa*, 1935. p. 96.

3 Canto xxvii, ll. 175-6.

4 Canto xxviii, ll. 204-6.

COMMERCE, A SOURCE OF REVENUE

As a source of revenue commerce came only next to agriculture. There was active trade by land and sea. It is said that bales and cartloads were numbered and marked (*kaṇṇeluttu*). The merchants were the

wealthiest community in the land and the king befriended them by honouring them with titles. Etti¹ was one such title.

TREASURE TROVE

We hear of an Etti Caṅkamaṇ, a flourishing merchant

at Madura.² Treasure trove was generally the property

of the state, and tended to swell the royal exchequer.

But so far as the Pāṇṭyan kingdom was concerned we hear

that the Pāṇṭyan Neṭuṇceḷiyaṇ issued a proclamation to

the effect that treasure and other legitimately acquired

wealth belonged by right to the discoverer.³

This proclamation was the result of a representation

made to the king by a poor young poet who was punished

by the subordinate officials. Thus this

was an exception
and not the rule. The presents of the
hillmen (like those
at the Nilgiris) to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan⁴ and the
tributes by sub-
jugated monarchs were other sources of
revenue, though
the income
from these items could not have been much.

The chief item of expenditure was
connected with the
civil and the military establishments of the
state. An idea
of the military expenditure will be
apparent from the
number of the fourfold army and
commissariat which fol-
lowed Ceṅkuṭṭuvan on his northern
expedition.⁵

1 Canto xv, l. 163.

2 Canto xv, l. 196.

3 Canto xxlii, ll. 128-9.

4 Canto xxv, ll. 35-55.

5 Canto xxvi, ll. 128-40. See also M.

op. cit., p. 134.

Raghava Aiyangar,

INTRODUCTION

Chariots	...	...	...
Elephants	...	...	...
Horses	...	...	...
Carts and carriages		...	...
Kaṇcukar	...	...	...
Dancing-girls	...	...	...
Musicians	...	...	...
Jesters	...	...	...

WARFARE

We have seen that the army of the

45

100

500

10,000

20,000

1,000

102

208

100

ancient Tamils-

consisted of a fourfold classification of chariots,

elephants, cavalry and infantry. The chief defence was by means of well furnished fortifications. The battlements and ram-parts were mechanically provided with efficient mechanisms containing curious devices in the shape of monkeys, kingfishers, sows, vultures, serpents, horses and swans.¹

Before the king left his capital he entertained his soldiers with a grand feast and sent his sword and umbrella on the state elephant in advance, on an auspicious day. After having prayed to the gods in the temples of his city and in the Yajñasālas the king actually left his town. This was what Ceṅkuṭṭuvan did on the eve of his northern expedition.² Such of the heroes as showed a bold front to the end and died, were honoured with Virakkal or Naṭukal, monuments raised in commemoration of their deeds of valour of which a good number are even now brought out by the spade of the archaeologist. Before the actual operations, an ultimatum was

generally sent to the enemy king
to the effect that those who did not

1 Canto xv. ll. 206-16.

2 Canto xxvi, ll. 52-66.

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voluntarily surrender would have to submit to
the horrors
of war.¹

A number of musical instruments were
displayed on

the field of battle. These were

koṭumparai, *neṭuvayir*,

muracam, *pāṇṭil*, etc. The kings who still
opposed him

in open war were taken prisoners after their
defeat and

released on their submission. The wars
were so fierce

that the soldiers sometimes cast off their arms and escaped

in the guise of ascetics, musicians and dancers, Brahmans

and other non-combatants.² This points to the preva-

lence of ethical standards in ancient warfare in South India.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Passing on to the department of justice we notice that the

chief magistrates who sat in the hall of justice (*Arakkaḷam*)

when they disposed of cases were Brahmans. The idea

was that those dispensing justice must be versed in the law codes.³

Though the kings were actuated by the best of motives

in meting out justice there was sometimes a miscarriage

as we note in the case of Kōvalan.⁴ There were jails and superintendents of jails.⁵ As already noticed there was a periodical release of prisoners. Usually capital punishment was awarded in cases of theft. Among others the six chief offenders according to the laws of the state were false witnesses, pseudo-*sannyāsins*, unchaste women, disloyal ministers, adulterers, and tale bearers.⁶

1 Canto xxv, ll. 183-94.

2 Canto xxvii, l. 179 ff.

3 Canto xxii, l. 8; xxvi, l. 246; xxviii, l. 222.

4 Canto xvi, l. 148, ff.

5 Canto xxiii, l. 103. *Maṇi.*, canto xix, l.

6 Canto v, ll. 128-34.

INTRODUCTION

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

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Already we have seen that the empire was divided into *nāṭas* (perhaps answering to modern provinces) and a sub-division of the *nāṭu* was the *kūrṇam* (district). But the village was the unit of administration.

Every village had a *maṇṇam* or the village *sabhā*, where the elders transacted the business of the village. There were certain tribal settlements in the hills and forests. The Eiyṇar settlement may be cited as an example. Excepting these settlements, the villages in general were not isolated groups far away from the link of humanity. There was active intercourse, political and commercial, between village and village and between village and city. Learned men and pious Brahmans of one kingdom felt at home in alien kingdoms. To cite an instance, the Brahman of Māṅkāṭu, a village in the Cēra *nāṭu*, visited sacred

places as far as Cape Comorin through the Cōla and Pāṇṭya kingdoms. In spite of the gloomy trail through woods and jungles the roads were safe. There were officials appointed by the state to look after the welfare of the village, and these were to a large extent responsible for the peace and security of the rural parts. They were often aided by the village assembly.

XI

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The celebrated commentator Naccinārkkiniyar divides the whole Tamil land into four divisions: Malaimaṇṭalam, Chōlamaṇṭalam, Pāṇṭyamaṇṭalam, and Toṇṭaimaṇṭalam. In the days of the *Cilappatikāram* there was no Toṇṭaimaṇṭalam division as such. There were then only three divisions. Malaimaṇṭalam was already referred to as the Cēra kingdom. It

may be noted in passing that

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the term *maṇṭalam* in the sense of a province or kingdom does not occur in the Caṅkam works.

The ancient Cēraṇātu was constituted by modern

Salem, Coimbatore, and the Nilgiri districts besides the

whole of Malabar and a part of Travancore (Vēṇātu).

This kingdom occupied five of the twelve divisions which

comprised all the Tamiḷakam. The five of the Cēraṇa-

ṭalam were Kuṭṭanātu, Kuṭanātu, Koṅkunātu, Pūlinātu,

and Malāṭu (Malaināṭu). Some of the titles of the Cēras

like Kuṭṭuvan and Pūliyan are coined from the names of

these territorial divisions. The ancient Koṅkunāṭu com-

prised the modern districts of Salem and Coimbatore. The

chief rivers of the Cēra kingdom were Ānporunai (Amarā-

vati), Kuṭavanāru, Kāñci (Noyyil), Kāriyāru, Cuḷliyāru,¹

Periyāru or Ponnāni, and Bavāni or Vāṇi. To this king-

dom Ceṅkuṭṭuvan added by conquest Koṭukūr in the south

of the Mysore state. Vañcikkaruvūr² was the capital of this

great kingdom. Toṇṭi and Muciri were the chief ports.

We are furnished with a full and detailed description of

the capital city, its suburbs, fortifications,
streets and roads,
public halls, museums, parks, temples and
maṭams and
the palace.³

The late Kanakasabhai surmised that
this Vañci might

be Tiru-karūr now a deserted
village three miles from

Kothaimangalam and this view has been
adopted by some

of the later scholars without bestowing
much thought on

this all-important question. This theory
did not go un-

challenged. Pandit M. Raghava
Aiyangar first identified

Vañci with Karuvūr in Tiruchirrapalli
district. Following

1 Suḷḷi falls into the western sea; at its
mouth is the town

Mucḷi.

Maṇi., canto xxviii; *Sila.*, canto xxviii, ll. 48-50.

INTRODUCTION

him Mahāvidvān R. Raghava Aiyangar, whose authority

on the Caṅkam classics cannot be disputed, wrote a book in

Tamil entitled *Vaṅcimānakar*. The long and short of this

erudite thesis was to settle once for all the controversy as

to the location of the original Cera capital, and after a

critical examination of all the aspects of the question, he

came to the only possible conclusion that this Vaṅcikkaru-

vūr was the present town Karūr in Trichinopoly district.

It is not possible nor is it necessary to traverse the ground

again. If epigraphy were pressed into service, the follow-

ing would be read with interest: 'A damaged record in the

Civā temple here (Nerūr, a village very near Karūr)

mentions Karuvūr as Vañcimānakaram which must help

to settle the identification of the original Vañci at Karūr

and not at Cranganore on the west coast.'¹

The chief mountains are the Kolli hills, the Ayirai

hills (in which the Ayirai river has its source), and the

chain of Ānamalais. This river Ayirai² must be Ponnāni

(Pūrṇavakini). The hill Ayirai
(Aivar-Malai) was sacred
to the goddess Korravai, the deity of the
Cēras. The
other hills of the Konkunāṭu are Nanrā and
Vaṇṭamalai,
the latter south of Karuvūr,

THE PĀṆṬYAN KINGDOM

It would appear that the ancient
Pāṇṭyan kingdom
extended far into the south where were
the Kumari
hill and the river Pahrūḷi both of
which had been
swallowed up by the sea long before the
commencement
of the Christian era.³ As if to
compensate for the loss

1 *Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly District*,
Vol. II, 1931, p.

2 Canto xxviii, ll. 145-6.

3 Canto xi, ll. 17-22; see commentary on canto viii, ll. 1-2,

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of this territory, the Pāṇṭyan king
Neṭuñceliyaṇ added

by conquest Miḷalaikkūṛram¹ and the
Muttūrkkūṛram²

from the Cōlas, apparently territories in the
modern dis-

trict of Tanjore,³ and Kuṇṭūrkkūṛram⁴ from
the Cēras.

It is only the gloss that gives this indication,
and we have

no other testimony to confirm it.⁵

If we are to follow the traditional
account of three

Caṅkams, and there is no reason why we

should not, the

ancient capital of the Pāṇṭyan kingdom was also swallowed

up by the sea, and this necessitated the moving of the

capital to Korkai, probably the Kavaṭapuram of Sanskrit

1 It is rather difficult to identify this, though South Indian

inscriptions often mention this as part of Pāṇṭināṭu. For instance

a record in the fourteenth year of the Pāṇṭyan king Jaṭavarman

Sundara Pāṇṭya of the thirteenth century A.D. refers to it. (See

also Tamil record No. 67 of 1910.) Tamil records Nos 460-1 of

1909 refer to two places, Kīlkūrū and Kaḷakūrū as subdivisions

of Mīlalaikūrū. Naṭuvirkūrū is another subdivision according

to Tamil records, 130 of 1908 and 425 of 1911.

2 This is also referred to in a number of inscriptions. Tamil

record No. 59 of 1909, dated in the thirteenth year of the Pāṇṭyan

King Jaṭavarman mentions Muttūrkūṛam in Paṇṭyamaṇṭalam.
See also 441 of 1904,
86 of 1905 and 80 and 266 of 1907. In the

thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Kappalūr seems
to have been

an important place in this subdivision (see Nos.
425 and 429 of
1913).

3 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Paṇṭyan
Kingdom*, p. 28.

4 This can be indentified with Kuṇṭūr-kūṛam
occurring in
the Madura inscription of a Paṇṭyan king whose
name is lost.

According to this, Kuṇṭūr was the capital
of Kuṇṭūr-kūṛam, and

this *kūṛam* formed a part of Aṇṭanāṭu (see
I.M.P., Vol. II, p.

1036, ed. by V. Rangachary).

According to a record of Trichino-

poly district, 460 of 1908, it came to be
known later as

Rājanārāyaṇa-Caturvētimankalam.

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literature. From this again the capital was transferred to the modern city of Madura, and this had been effected by the time of Pliny as he refers to it.¹ This became the seat of the great and ancient academy well known as the Caṅkam. Korkai also continued to be a chief city under the charge of the crown prince. The chief hill in the kingdom was Potiyil, the residence of the sage Agastya if we are to believe the traditional account, and the im-

portant river was the Vaikai which was crossed when in flood by boats and canoes.

The limits of the ancient Pāṇṭyan kingdom may roughly be stated to have comprised the modern districts of Madura, Ramnad and Tinnevely. The Vellar flowing through the Pudukkottai State formed its northern boundary. The Cōḷa kingdom consisted of a part of the modern Trichinopoly district, as well as Tanjore, Chingleput and South Arcot districts. The Toṭṭaimaṇṭalam which rose to prominence under the Pallavas was an appendage to the old Cōḷamaṇṭalam. It was in its turn divided into a number of *nāṭus* and *kūrrams*. Like the

Pāṇṭyan kingdom the Cōlamanṭalam had two capital cities Uraiṃūr (Sans., Uragapuram) in the Trichinopoly district and Kāverippaṭṭiṇam in the Tanjore district. The latter achieved prominence under Karikālaccōḷan, the son of Ilamcēcenni, but a part of it was destroyed by the sea in the course of two generations. It consequently lost its ancient glory as the principal seat of government.²

According to the *Periplus* the capital city Uraiṃūr was

the chief mart for pearls and the well-known Argynitic

1 E. H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman*

Empire and India, 1928, p. 167.

2 For a detailed description of the city, its fortifications,

streets and roads, see cantos v and vi.

muslins; Argynitic being an adjective derived from the name Uragapuram. Sixty years later Ptolemy states that Uraiyūr was the capital. The Kāveri was the only important river of the Cōla country.

To conclude, 'the traditional meeting-place of the three Tamil kingdoms was the temple of Cellan̄ṭi Amman on the banks of the Kāveri, twelve miles west of Kuṣittalai and three miles below the junction of the Amarāvati and the Kāveri. The temple was the common place of worship of the kings of the three Tamil dynasties; a bund which runs to the south of the river marks the boundary between the Cōla and the Pāṇṭya territories, and the Karaipōttan̄ār on the opposite bank of the river was the boundary between the Cōla and the Cēra kingdoms.'¹

XII

RELIGIOUS DATA

Man is a religious animal and invokes the assistance of superhuman beings in his weal and woe. This invocation comprises rituals of fasting and feasting, singing and dancing. These are believed to please the deity who in his turn is expected to shower blessings on his worshippers. The chief gods invoked by the ancient Tamils were Seyōn (also Murukan and Vēlan) and Māyōn (Kṛiṣṇa or the Black God). Other gods worshipped were Civa, Koravai or the Goddess of Victory, Balarāma, Varuna, Indra, etc. There is a view that some of these were peculiar to the different regions (of which five are distinguished) in the Tamil land.² But these are also Vedic and Purāṇic gods, and their mention in early Tamil poetry shows that the assimilation

1 *Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly District*, Vol. II, 1931, p. 67.

2 *See History of the Tamils*, p. 75 ff.

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lation and the blend of the two cultures, Sanskrit and Tamil, was a thing of the ancient past. The earliest extant work

in Tamil, the *Tolkāppiyam* bears evidence of this. Similar ideas are found scattered in the *Cilappati-kāram*, and the twin epics betray clear influence of the Buddha and the Jaina cults which had come to stay in the Tamil land.

Side by side with these dissenting sects of which three are mentioned—the Buddha, the Jaina and the Ājīvaka, the established religion of the land was in a flourishing condition. At the outset, it must be remarked that there was no nice distinction between the orthodox religion and the so-called religion of the dissenting sects. The fundamental principle of all these sects were the same, and the differences, if any, were minor and trivial. It was in philosophical outlook and speculation that there was any difference, and hence the masses of the people to whom the

higher philosophy was a sealed book did not trouble themselves about it. The religious discussions were only among the cultured few, and differences in opinions and views among them were treated with mutual respect. By the orthodox religion we mean Caivism and Vaiṣṇavism. Even here the bitter hatred of the Caivā and

Vaiṣṇavā cults as separate sects, which was only a later growth on the tree of Indian religion, is totally absent in the *Cilappatikāram*.

It is not possible to say whether in the days of the epic a certain person was a Caivā or Vaiṣṇavā in his creed, and hence he cannot be marked exclusively a Caivā or exclusively a Vaiṣṇava. In fine, the sectarian spirit was totally absent, and every person was both a Caivā and a Vaiṣṇava. Mādari, a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and hence a Vaiṣṇavā paid respects to Kavunti-Aṭigal, a Jain *sannyā-sinī*.

A classic example is Cēraṇ Cēntuṭṭuvan himself. Besides his prayers at the Agnihōtrāsāla of his palace on the eve of his expedition to the north, the king went to the Civa temple and bore the feet of the Lord on his head as a mark of respect to Him. At this time the priests of the temple of Āṭakamaṭam, the local Vaiṣṇava temple, gave him the *prasādam* (garland of flowers) which he wore on his shoulders. The commentator has identified Āṭakamaṭam with the Trivandrum Padmanābhasvāmī temple. But as Pandit R. Raghava Aiyangar has ably argued that once the thesis that Karūr was the capital of the Cēras is established, it could not be that priests came all the way from Trivandrum to Karūr, and that therefore we must look for the temple in or near Karūr.¹ Therefore this must be the Ranganātha temple in Karūr, while the Civa temple must have been the Pacupatikōil of that place.²

The epic also mentions the great shrines dedicated to Subrahmaṇya like Tiruccendūr, Tiruccengōḍe, Ērakam and Veṅkuṇru.³ The dances *tuṭikkūttu* and *kuṭaikkūttu* are attributed to Subrahmaṇya as the *koṭukoṭṭi* and the *pāṇṭarāṅkam* are to Civa.

The worship of the Dēvi as the Korravai or the Goddess of Victory and to Maṇimekalai as the chief guardian deity of the sea is seen throughout. The idea that Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī and Pārvatī represent different aspects of the same Power is evident from the *veṇṇā* in Canto xxii. This reminds us of the Lalitōpākhyāna portion

1 *Vāṇcimānakar*; cf. canto xxvi, commentary on l. 62; *T.A.S.*, Vol. V. p. 116.

2 Dikshitar also visited this ancient town and is inclined to

confirm the learned pandit's opinion.

3 Canto xxiv, p. 516

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of the *Brahmāṇṭa Purāṇa* where it is stated that the original goddess at Kāñci was Mahālakṣmī who came to be known in latter times as Kāmākṣhī. The ritual dance *vēṭṭuvavari* in honour of Korravai was often performed by hill

tribes like the Maṇavar. The opening lines of Canto xii, in fact the whole canto, describe this dance, and in this connexion we find that among the *pali* (offerings) mentioned human and bloody sacrifices were not uncommon.¹ The Tēvi is often praised as the destroyer of

Mahiṣāsura.

The ritual dance connected with Viṣṇu goes by the name of the *kuravaikkūttu* (probably Sans., Rāsakrīḍa). This kind of dance was largely performed by the female members of the community in honour of the god Kṛiṣṇa who, tradition affirms, married the cowherdess Pinnai in the same way that Murukaṇ married Vaḷḷi, a hill girl. When Kōvalaṇ was executed under the orders of the Paṇṭyan king, the city was visited with a number of ill omens which indicated some disaster to the city and its residents. According to the belief of the times such things could be averted by invoking deities dear to them. Hence a *kuravaikkūttu* was arranged by Mātari and her daughter Aiyai in the presence of Kaṇṇaki. Another *kuravaikkūttu* was performed by the women of the hill tribes on the Neṭuvelkunṇam, the hill which Kaṇṇaki reached after the conflagration at Madura, and where, as she stood under the *vēṅkai* tree, a celestial car came down and took her

to Heaven. In honour of Kaṇṇaki; these
a dance and performed it with success.

ladies arranged

Connected with the worship of Kṛiṣṇa was
the worship of Balarāma, his elder
brother. That there was a cult of Balarāma
is obvious from the mention of a separate

¹ See in this connexion E. A. Payne, *The Śāktas*, introduc-
tory chapter.

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temple to him.¹ Prof.

R. G. Bhandarkar is of opinion

that the cult of Balarāma was known in
Patañcali's time.

It is not clear when the cult became extinct.²
It is remark-

able that the worship of Balarāma was

in vogue in Tamil.

South India in the time of the
Cilappatikāram.³

Again, we find evidence in the
Cilappatikāram of

the existence of separate temples to the
Sun God, the

Moon God, the Kalpa Tree, the Airāvada,
the Vajra,

Āttan, and other Pācaṇṭa gods.⁴ In the
cities were

found local shrines for the guardian deities.
Such definite

statements as to the existence of temples
bear testimony

to the fact that the institution of the
temple had a

much more ancient origin than that we
would at present

imagine. Evidence is not altogether lacking
that temples

existed in India in the fourth millenium B. C.
as the recent

finds of the Indus Valley indicate.
Again, the four
Pūtams named after the four castes and the
Pūta at the
Pūtacatukkam were also offered prayers.
Among the
Vēdic deities Indra, Varuṇa and Agni are
invoked. In
more than one place, there are references to
Vēdic Brah-
mans, their fire-rites, and their chanting
of the Vēdic

1 Canto ix, 1, 10.

2 See his *Saivism, Vaiṣṇavism,*
and minor religious systems,
p. 13.

3 Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri
drew my atten-
tion to a temple of Balarāma at
Uḍabhanēṣvaram on the seashore
at a short distance from Uḍupī, dedicated by Śrī
Madhavācārya,
worship being conducted there down to the present
time.

An image of Balarāma said to be a typical example of the Kushāna period, is one of the acquisitions noted in the *An. Rep.* of the U. P. Provincial Museum, Lucknow, for 1930. the year ending

4 Canto ix, ll. 9-15.

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hymns. The Brahman received much respect from the king and was often given gifts of wealth and cattle. The *purōhita* (*āśān*) held a high status among the chief officials of the state, and he was a member of the cabinet which the king consulted on matters affecting the state. This is not unnatural as the Tamil kings claimed to be Kṣatriyas and the literary tradition connected them with the Solar and Lunar races.

Among the deities of the heretical sects, viz. the Pācāṇ-
tas, of whom the *Tivākaram* distinguishes as many as ninety-six sects, the Cāttan is

prominently mentioned.

Even now remains of these old Śāsta temples are found

in the boundary limits of villages, and people in distress

invoke their aid to tide over their difficulties. As now,

in olden days the temples of these deities were frequently

visited by distressed people and their wishes were granted.

These Śāsta temples appear to be indigenous to South

India, where they are largely found, especially in the

Tamil districts. But in the age of the *Cilappatikāram*

owing to the impact of Sanskrit culture the Śāsta cult was

apparently treated as heretical in character.¹

We do not propose to deal fully

with the three dis-

senting sects of Hinduism to which reference has already been made. There are references to the Buddha, the Intravikāra of Pukār, and the Mābōti,² but the references to Buddhism which can be gleaned from the epic are very few. This is probably because the other epic *Maṇimē-*

1 It is interesting to note in this connexion that Śāsta or

Mahāśāsta is the son born of Civa when He embraced Mōkini

(Viṣṇu in disguise), and hence he is called Hariharaputra.

According to Aṭiyārkunallār and the *Tivākaram* another name

for Cāttaṇ is Cātavākanan.

2 Canto x, ll. 11-14.

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kalai gives a full treatment of the subject. In the same

way there are but few references to the Camaṇa sect,

the Ājīvaka, and to know what it is, one has to turn again

to the pages of the *Maṇimēkalai*. It may be remarked in

passing that all these sects were patronized by Aśōka, the Mauryan Emperor.

Some details about the Jain practices and customs are

also furnished by the *Cilappatikāram*. From a study

of Canto xv one is tempted to conclude that Kōvalan and

Kaṇṇaki followed the Jain practice of bathing and cloth-

ing and eating.

In fact they did so at Mātari's house. But

the evidence of the *Maṇimēkalai* shows that they were

Buddhists. As has already been said the distinctions

between the orthodox religion and
the other sects were
not sharp. While Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was of
the orthodox faith,
his brother Iṇāṅkō-Aṭikaḷ is at least
contended to have
been a Jaina, and the poet
Kūlavāṇikaṇ Cāttanār, their
common friend, was a Buddhist. This
is not peculiar to
South India. We know, for example,
that members of
Harṣha's family 'acted on their
individual preferences in
the matter of religion'. While
Prabhākaravardhana,
Harṣha's father, followed the worship
of the Sun, his elder
son Rājyavardhana was a Buddhist.
Harṣha worshipped
the Sun, Buddha and Civa. And yet
there was no con-

flict of interests among them.¹

Again while the parents of
Kōvalan were Buddhists,
those of Kaṇṇaki embraced the
Ajivaka faith.² Thus
different members of the same
household followed differ-
ent faiths and there was no sectarian
spirit among them.

1 V. A. Smith, *The Early History
of India*, 4th ed., revised
by S. M. Edwardes, pp. 358-9. See also R.
K. Mookerjee, *Harsha*
(Rulers of India Series).

2 Canto xxvii, ll. 90-100.

Only two explanations can be offered for this. Either the people did not look upon religious distinctions seriously, or there were no fundamental differences between one sect and another. To every one of them, *karma* was a factor to be reckoned with. Man's actions bad or good are bound to yield results bad or good. Suffering in this birth may not necessarily be due to unrighteous acts done now but may be the result of past actions. Hence man must do his duty (*svadharma*) if he wants to attain salvation. The people in those days seem to have pinned their faith to this doctrine as many do even now.

Before we close this section it is worth noting that of all the Vedic gods, the worship of Indra is prominently mentioned. In fact the whole of Canto v of the epic is devoted to a detailed description of the festival of Indra and festivities connected with it. It would appear from the canto that the king interested himself in celebrating - that

festival with grand success, and to witness it, gods and men came even from remote parts of North India. It was an annual festival lasting for a number of days. It commenced on the full moon day in the month of Cittirai (April), and with the preliminary worship of the guardian deity who was sent by Indra to help an ancient king of the Pukār line, Mucukunta. Sacrifices were offered in the five different *maṇḍams* of the city of Pukār.¹

One feature of the festival was the removal of the drum from the Vajrakkōṭṭam to the Airāvata temple, where it was placed on the nape of the elephant sacred to Indra. The bathing ceremony of Indra was the important day of the festival. We hear of the Indradhvajam festival in Sanskrit literature² which can be identified with the ceremony

1 ll. 140-4.

2 E.g. *Vīramitrōdaya Rājanītiprakāśa*,

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of *talaikkōl* in Tamil literature, but there was no actual celebration of Indra's festival. How the ancient Tamils took to this special form of Indra's worship still remains a puzzle.

XIII

SOCIAL CONDITIONS : TOWNS AND TOWN LIFE

If the *Maṇimēkalai* can be characterized a philosophico-religious work, the *Cilappatikāram* can be said to be a treatise on political and social life.¹ Here we have a description of the three capitals with their glowing culture and civilization. In the busy streets of the cities any

number of people belonging to various nations were met, most of them having come on commercial and other business. The municipal administration was excellent. The roads and streets were kept in good condition and were lighted. Committing nuisance in public streets was punishable. The houses seem to have been well built and properly provided with ventilation. Seven-storied buildings were not uncommon in the ancient cities, thus pointing to a considerable development of engineering skill in ancient South India. Among the communities the Brahmans received much respect especially for their learning in the sacred lore and for their continuance of the fire-rites. They were often awarded rich presents both in cash and kind. They were left unmolested during times of war, as was the case during Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's battle on the banks of the Ganges. Next came the merchant community, and being the wealthiest community its members were honoured with titles by the reigning chieftains of the land.

1 As Dikshitar has devoted a long chapter to this question in his book *Studies in Tamil Literature*

and History only a baeer outline is given here.

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Life in towns was one of luxury and ease. Some of

the amusements of the people were dumb-shows and

dancing accompanied by music, both vocal and instrumen-

tal. Women freely participated in such amenities of life.

They attended temples and took part in the public dances.

They decked themselves with costly attire and ornaments

and made themselves attractive. Their clothes were of

cotton, wool, silk, and even rat's hair.¹
One mode of
their decoration was the painting
of their bodies with
scented pastes and powders and the
wearing of garlands of
flowers.

The womenfolk in towns can
be classified into two
divisions : housewives attending to
household duties and
leading pure lives, and prostitutes who were
public women
living in special quarters where
the voluptuous young men
of the city thronged.
Even married men resorted to these
places and wasted all their wealth on
these courtesans,
caring little for their wedded wives. A
typical example

is Kōvalan who spent all his fortune on
Māṭavi the

dancing-girl, as a result of which he became
so poor that

he had to go to Madura to earn a living.
Outside the

city in the suburbs, were public places
which were the

residences of ascetics and
penance-performers, both ortho-
dox and heterodox,

VILLAGES AND VILLAGE LIFE

If the town life was rich, the village life was equally
so. The villagers, of whom the agriculturists, cowherds
and shepherds formed the majority, led a simple life
attending to their hereditary professions of cultivation and
cattle-tending. The villages were not altogether cut off
from the activities of town life. There were means of

transport which were, primarily,
 bullock-carts on land and
 boats on water. Between the villages, or
 more properly
 between two great towns, thick forests
 abounded with
 wild animals and serpents, streams and
 springs of water,
 fruit trees and trees of other kinds,
 cornfields and flower
 gardens. Iḷanko-Aṭigaḷ gives us a vivid
 picture of all
 this when describing the route from
 ancient Pukār to
 Madura-¹

The monotonous life of the villager
 was often enliven-
 ed by rural amusements of a varied
 character. Every

village had a common dancing-hall
(*kaḷam*).² Even the

village women took part in these public
performances like

the *tūṇaikai*, a kind of dance.³ Having
enough to eat

and drink, the villagers led a contented
and happy life.

Notwithstanding the security and peace
afforded by the

kings of the land, theft was not
uncommon. The Mara-

var who lived in forests and desert tracts,
otherwise known

as the Eiyṇar, who were often employed
as soldiers in

wars by the Tamil kings, had for their
chief profession

highway robbery⁴. They often deprived
the unwary way-

farer of his belongings: cattle lifting was
one feature of

their thieving. They were addicted to liquor

and ate from
a common table. They hunted the wild
hog, boar and
deer, whose flesh they ate, using their
skins as clothes
and their ivory teeth and nails as ornaments.

MARRIAGE

Another aspect of social life deserving
notice is mar-
riage. In the ancient Tamīlakam two
forms of marriage

1 Cantos x-xi.

2 *Maṇi.*, canto iv, l. 6.

3 Canto v, l. 70.

4 See also Dikshitar's paper 'The Eiy_nar'
XXXI, No. 1.

in *Sentamil*, Vol.

were prevalent, the *kaḷvau* and the *karpu*

(i.e. marriage in secrecy and marriage in the open). It was a peculiar custom of the *kaṭavu* that the lover secretly met the unmarried girl of his choice and made overtures of love to her. This roughly corresponds to the *gandharva* form of marriage. The lover usually came bearing a present in his hand as a token of his love. It was one of the divisions of the *kaikkīlai* form of love.¹ The whole of the canto 'Kāṇalvari' is a dissertation on the different stages of the *kaṭavu* from of marriage.² The *karpiyal* from which had already taken the place of the *kaṭaviyal*, from the epoch of the *Tolkāppiyam* if not earlier,³ had come to stay by the time of the epics. Though there are details of the *kaṭavu* form of marriage, it seems to have been confined to certain communities such as those living near the seaside or those living in the hills. In other words, the people in the lower stages of culture adopted it. In the

more civilized parts of the land, the form of marriage was that laid down in the *Dharmasāstras* and the *Grhyasūtras*. The chanting of the Vēdic mantras by the *purōhita*, the circumambulation of fire and similar customs show the profound influence which Sanskrit culture had on the Tamils. If the Tamils took to northern customs of marriage, the northerners who settled in the Tamil land also adopted some of the Tamil practices in their system of marriage. The tying of *tāli* (*māṅkalyam*) or a sacred thread to the neck of the bride by the bridegroom is an instance in point. There is no warrant in the ancient law-codes for this practice. It is a practice of the Tamils copied in later times by the so-called Aryans. This is another

1 *Tolk.*, 'Porul', *sūtrams* 104-6.

2 For further details see canto xxvi, 'Kunṇakkuravai'.

instance of the harmonious fusion of the two ancient cultures.¹

MUSIC AND DANCING

Passing on, we meet with a wealth of material for an

elaborate study of music and dancing. There was ritual

singing and ritual dancing. Dancing as a part of reli-

gious worship is in evidence among the ancient peoples.

It is said² that 'in early Christianity bishops led the faith-

ful in the sacred dances both in the

churches and before

the tombs of the martyrs'. We also hear that the Tara-

humare Indians of Mexico regard the dance as 'a very

serious and ceremonial matter, a kind of worship and in-

cantation rather than amusement.'

A dance conducted with the intention of moving the

deity becomes a real form of prayer and this is in evi-

dence in the Tamil classic. In addition there were dumb-

shows; but there is no evidence of any regular play having

been enacted.

The *Cilappatikāram* furnishes the legendary origin of

dancing. Once in the *sabhā* of Indra, his son Jayanta

misbehaved with the heavenly actress Ūrvacī, in a manner

that enraged the sage Agastya who cursed Jayanta to be

born a bamboo stick in the Vindhya hills, and Ūrvaci a

courtesan on the earth. Hence the name Jayanta is cele-

brated in the ceremony and worship of *talaikkōl*. It was

a bamboo stick symbolical of Jayanta. Often the handle

of the umbrella of an enemy-king was used as the *talaikkōl*.

1 The marriage of Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalan is a description of

marriage in high life See canto i for the preliminaries, the

pantal, the religious and social functions ending with the *āśīrvāta* rites.

It was duly bathed and adorned and carried in procession before it was finally taken to the public theatre. The actress for the day placed it on her head perhaps to serve as an equivoise when regular dancing began.

The worship of Murukaṇ and Māyōṇ included dancing as a relieving feature of the occasion. The former is the war-god and the latter the love-god. But a number of dances are associated with gods like Siva, Durgā, Indrāṇī, besides Murukaṇ and Kṛiṣṇa. Aṭiyārkkunallār informs us.

that Kṛiṣṇa danced ten kinds of dances¹ (of which *alliyak-kūttu*, *mullāṭal*, and *kuṭṭakkūttu* are mentioned in the text) after his victory over Kamsa, Bāṇāsura, and after the

release of Aniruddha. Iṅkō-Aṭihaḥ refers to the dances of Śiva, Murugaṅ Kāma, Durgā, Lakṣhmī, and Indrāṇī. Śiva is said to have danced the *koṭukoṭṭi* and *pāṇṭarankam* dances after the burning of the Tripura (Three-Cities) in the presence of Brahmā who was his charioteer at that time.² Murugaṅ is said to have danced the *tuṭi* after exposing

the deceit of Śūrāsura; Kāma (the God of Love) the dance of Hermaphrodite; Durgā the dance of *marakkāl* after vanquishing the *asuras*; Lakṣhmī (the Goddess of Wealth) the dance of *pāvai* after her victory over the *asuras*; Indrāṇī the *kaṭayam* after defeating Bāṇāsura.

But it is difficult to find similar references to these dances in Sanskrit literature. Of the eleven kinds of dancing,³ two divisions are distinguished: *nilainiṇṭāṭal* (a dance fixing oneself in a particular station); and *pātam viṇṭāṭal*. Six dances like the *alliyam* constitute the first division and five like the *tuṭi* the second division.

1 Canto vi, l. 46 ff.

2 *ibid.*, l. 39 ff.

3 *ibid.*, l. 65, comm.

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In addition to these are the *kuravaikkū* tu so elaborately explained in the epic and performed by the women of the cowherd and other communities. It is said that Kṛṣṇa and Pinnai once engaged in that kind of dance. There was also the *kūttu* of the Maṇavar in honour of Korravai. The *Cilappatikāram* shows an advanced state of evolution in the art of dancing. From primitive ritual dancing, it became transformed into a mere form of secular amusement. This must have been due to the profound influence exerted by the classic works like the *Bharatanāṭyasāstra*. The

term *tēsikkūttu* in the 'Aran-kērrukātai' will itself explain the indigenous as opposed to the alien forms of dancing introduced into the Tamil country. In explaining the technical terms the commentator quotes as authorities such authors as Ceyirriyanār, Mativāṇar, Baratacēnāpatiyār, Kuṇanūluṭaiyār, Jayantanūluṭaiyār.

From a study of relevant portions of our epic, the *kūttus* may be broadly classified into *vēttiyaḷ* and *potu-viyaḷ*. Another classification was *cāntikkūttu* and *vinōtak-kūttu*.¹ Dancing was always to the accompaniment of music.

The *Cilappatikāram* belongs to the class of *icait-tamiḷ*, in the sense that it has six cantos on music— 'Arankērrukātai', 'Kāṇalvari', 'Vēṇirkātai', 'Āycciyar-kuravai', 'Kuṇrakkuravai' and 'Vēṭṭuvavari'. Melody is fully realized as the basis of Hindu music. The structure of the musical modes or *rāgas* rests invariably on a system of seven notes. W. W. Hunter remarks: 'It is

indeed impossible to adequately represent the Indian system by the European notation; and the full range of its effects can only be rendered by Indian instruments, a vast collection of sound producers, slowly elaborated

1 For details see
Aṭiyārkunallār's commentary, pp. 79-80.

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during 2,000 years to suit the special requirements of
Hindu Music.'¹

South Indian music, usually called
Karnāṭaka music
seems to follow largely the theory, modes and
notation of
early Sanskrit musicians. But still in many

respects it

differs from them and maintains a distinct individuality un-

broken for centuries together. Refinements were intro-

duced from time to time in the original *rāgas*².

It would be an interesting study to examine the ancient

theory of music, and its practice by means of musical

instruments in use.³

But it is so technical in character that

it is rather difficult to understand the full significance of

the text in spite of elaborate commentaries on it. *Isai* is

the technical term for music and singing, secular and

religious, and may be vocal or instrumental or both.

Suffice it here to say that the ancient

Tamils like the ancient Greeks had a highly developed art of music.*

There were musicians of both sexes. The male singers were known as *pāṇars* and female singers as *vīralis* and *pāṇinis*. They went from place to place displaying their musical talents and thus earning their livelihood. In addition to these professionals the ancient Tamils were lovers of music. Four varieties of tunes—*paṇ*, *paṇṇiyār-rīram*, *tīram*, *tīrattīram*—were developed, appropriate perhaps to each of the four regions into which the whole Tamil land was divided. The 'Arankerrukatai' (canto iii)

2 See introduction to M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar's *Svaramēla-kalānidhi*.

3 For a collection of important extracts from the epic see M. Abraham Pandithar's *Karunāmṛtasāgaram*, 1917, pp. 526 ff.

4 For a short history of music, 'The How and Why Series', see W. J. Turner's *Music in*

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is a treatise by itself of the various aspects of musical

science. Besides the text, the commentary throws wel-

come light without which it is not possible to make out

anything of the ancient modes of Tamil music.

The qualifications of the songster, the drummer, the flutist, and the *viṇā* player are described in elaborate detail. The songster must possess the instinct to group and develop the notes by distinguishing the foreign from the indigenous.¹

He and his assistants like the drummer must be versed in *nāṭaka* literature which is divided into two parts, one relating to the king and the court, and the other relating to the common people. The drummer had to adjust his performance to that of the songster so that the latter might not feel the strain, nor the audience the monotony of the pure song. He supplied the deficiencies of

the vocalist

and the instrumentalist by appropriately swelling or reducing

the sound of the drum. His skill much depended on the

practice of his hand.² The flutist was a practised hand in what was known as *cittirappuṇarppu* which was nasalizing

the hard consonants in singing a musical piece. He must

be an expert in the use of his fingers.³

The *viṇā* player⁴ must be versed in fourteen *pālais*,

four pertaining to the lower key, seven to the medium and

three to the higher. In this way he adjusted the sound.

From a study of Canto iii in the *Cilappatikāram* three

kinds of musical performance can be

distinguished—

1 Canto iii, ll. 30-8.

2 *ibid.*, ll. 45-55.

3 *ibid.*, ll. 56-69.

4 *ibid.*, ll. 70-94.

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the *vīṇa*, the flute and the vocal. The musician exhibited his skill either by playing on the *vīṇa* or flute, or by singing, but in all cases he was accompanied by the low-voiced *mirutnkam* and similar instruments. Four kinds of *vīṇa* are referred to by the commentator—*pēriyāl*, *makarayāl*, *sakōṭayāl*, *senkōṭṭiyāl*. The *yāl*

was distinguished by the number of its strings.
The flute was classi-

fied into five types according to the material of which it was made: bamboo, sandalwood, bronze, red catechu and

ebony. Of these bamboo was the best, bronze middling while sandalwood and the others were inferior. The flute

had seven holes for the seven *svaras*—sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, da, ni. Seven fingers were pressed into service when

playing on the flute.¹ The seven fingers are three of the left hand leaving out the thumb and the small finger, and

four of the right hand leaving out the thumb.

Of percussion instruments, which were generally hit

with a stick and were accompaniments for any perfor-

mance, thirty-one kinds were distinguished. All of them were made of stretched skins.²

A qualified actress went through seven years' training

from her fifth year to her twelfth, and exhibited her skill on the public stage to win the appreciation and approval of the king⁸

XIV SUPERSTITIONS

The remark has been made already that the ancient Tamils were, like all ancient peoples, god-fearing, simple,

1 p. 101,

2 *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p. 799-n.

3 For the construction of the stage, *ibid.*, 295-6.

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superstitious, and almost ready to take things for granted.

That they had a number of deities and that they sent their

prayers to the gods in their daily life has been indicated

in the foregoing pages. It was an age of crude astro-

logy, and its aid was sought whenever any one fell ill

and sickness persisted. This was especially so when

girls were stricken with love-sickness. Little knowing that

their unmarried daughters were under the frenzy of love,

their parents treated them for one sickness or another.

The final relief came, of course, only with the marriage

of the girl. Side by side with this, the ancient Tamils

attached much importance to dreams. There was the

belief that a dream foreshadowed coming fortune or

misfortune. It was believed that a dream,

as they re-

membered it, would come true at some future time.

Kaṇṇaki had an evil dream which she communicated to

Tēvanti; and the Pāṇṭyan queen dreamt a horrid dream

on the eve of the conflagration at Madura, of which she

informed her husband, the king

Neṭuñceliyaṇ.¹ There

was in existence a treatise on dreams which foretold the

results of dreams, good or bad.

Aṭiyārkkunallār quotes

from that book in his commentary.²

We may draw one or two references from the text to

show how the ancient Tamils were superstitious. The

nāṭkōḷ and the practice of *parasthānam* on an auspicious

day on the eve of starting on distant expeditions or other parts of the country may be cited. The appearance of a hump-backed bull from an opposite direction when setting out on any business was supposed to lead to calamity.³

The following among others were supposed to spell disaster

- 1 Canto xx. ll. 1-12.
- 2 p. 408.
- 3 Canto xvi, ll. 100-101.

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to the State: The falling down of the sceptre and the royal umbrella of their own accord; the appearance of Indra's bow (a rainbow) at night, and the falling of stars during

the day-time, were regarded as omens¹ foretelling that some evil was in store for the ruling house and even for the kingdom. They had faith in gods and goddesses flying in the air to give aid to the distressed, such as the shipwrecked, and they also heard with faith the preachings of Cāraṇas, Yakṣas and other divinities whose feet did not of course touch the earth. Faith in the efficacy of mantras like the *pañcāksara* and *aṣṭāksara* was widespread. Belief in evil spirits who made a feast of dead and wounded bodies, and also frequented burial grounds, is attested to. The ancient Tamils had their own belief in expiatory ceremonies; for example, Kōvalan helped in her *prāyascittam* (expiation) the Brahman lady who killed the mungoose. They took purificatory baths in sacred pools of water and give lavish gifts in cash and kind to the deserving, all of which, it was believed, would stand them in good stead in their lives after death. It is significant that there was a treatise on theft

known as *Karavaṭam*, to which the state goldsmith referred in his argument with the executioners of Kōvalan.²

The existence of a high degree of excellence in the art of painting is clear from the reference to *Ōvianūl*, to the different aspects and modes of painting, and the large use of it on walls of houses and on stage curtains. In this connexion the commentator furnishes notes from the *Nāṭakanūl*, *Paṇcabāratiyaṃ* and other works now lost to us.

The carving out of Kaṇṇaki's image and the building of temples, *paḷḷis*,

and *kōḷḷams* also substantiate the view

1 Canto xx, l. 1 ff.

2 Canto xvi, l. 189.

that sculpture and architecture were developed to the same high degree as the other fine arts, such as music and dancing. In fact, mention is made of all the sixty-four arts known to the Tamils.¹

XV

TRACES OF ARYAN CULTURE

The life described in the *Cilappatikāram* is generally

permeated by Aryan concepts and Aryan religious ideas.

This is also true of Cankam works like the *Tolkāppiyam*,

the *Narrinai*, the anthologies of the *Akanāṇūru* and the

Puranānūru. It is evident that the Tamil imagination has

been from early times influenced by Aryan culture. It can

be safely asserted that in the Cankam age the original Tamil

culture was transformed into a synthesis of Sanskrit and

Tamil elements. The author of the *Cilappatikāram* must

have had first-hand knowledge of the Sanskrit works on

drama and music as well as of the Epics, and the Purāṇas.

The following among the many may be cited as instances

of Aryan influence in South India.

(i) The opening lines of the first chapter are
laudatory of Sūrya, Candra,
Indra, and
Varuṇa of the Vedic literature.²

(ii) In the first chapter again
we find that the
marriage rites of Kōvalan

and Kaṇṇaki

were performed in the Aryan
fashion with
the help of a learned
Brahman *purōhita*.²

1

Vātsyāyan's *Kāmasūtra*, Bk. I. § 3, st 14-5, comm.

2 For similar references see *Tolk.*,
Kalittokai, st. 141.

'Porul', *sūtra* 88;

3 *Māmutupārppāṇ maraivaḷi kāṇṇiṭa tivalam*
ceyvatu, canto

1, ll. 52-3.

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The bridegroom went around
the fire as

enjoined¹ by the
Gr̥hyasūtras on Vaiśyas,
 and Kōvalan was a Vaiśya.
 The fire-cult
 had been introduced into the
 Tamil country
 in much earlier times,²
 and the monarchs of
 old engaged in Vedic Yajñas or
 sacrifices.
 Instances of this are not
 lacking. We have the Cōla
Rājasūyamvēṭṭa Perunar-
 kiṭṭi, the Cēra Celkelu-kutṭuvan,
 the Pāṇṭya
 Palyākaśālai-Mutukuṭumi.³

(iii)

There is again a reference to the region of
 Uttarakurus or the
Bhōgabhūmi of San-
 skrit literature in Canto ii of the
 epic and

elsewhere, and the
Patirruppattu speaks⁴
of Pālai-Kautamanār going to
Heaven in
human form helped by his king
Palyānaic-
celkelu-kuttuvan.

(iv) The general description of dancing
and music,

the dance of Mātavi in
particular before
the Cōla king, and the very
names Mātavi,
Citrāpati, and Mātari lead us to
infer that
the author is indebted to
Aryan ideas.

Though the *yāl* is a
characteristic Tamīl
instrument, the art and science
of dancing
reveal borrowings from an alien

culture.

(v)

The reference to the *sūta* and the *māgadha*⁵
among the establishment of
the royal

1 C. H. I., Vol. I, p. 233.

2 Tolk., 'Porul', *sūtra* 92.

3 *Puṇam.*, st. 6 and 12.

4 See also third Ten.

5 Canto v, l. 48. For similar references
see the *Matu- raikkāṇci*, a composition of Mānkuṭi

Marutaṇār whose contem-

household may point to
the introduction of
another Aryan institution.

(vi) The epic mentions deities
like Siva, Baladeva,
Subrahmany, Vishṇu and Indra, and their
worship, in more than one place.¹

To conclude, the dissemination of Aryan culture was
largely brought about by that class of wandering mendicant
whose business was to spread the light of know-
ledge from one part of the country to
another. The

exposition of the Purāṇa is spoken of as
tiravōruraikkum-

*ceyal*² and it was expounded by ascetics who
made the out-

skirts of the city their residence.

From the foregoing discussion it can be noted that

there is nothing in the *Cilappatikāram* which would mark

it off from the cultural point of view as a poem belonging

to an age different from that of the *Puranānūru*, *Akanā-*

nūru, *Eṭṭuttokai*, *Pattuppāṭṭu* or even the *Tolkāppiyam*.

If detailed references are lacking in these works it is due to

the difference in the themes of each respective composi-

tion. If the *Puranānūru* and *Akanānūru* do not furnish

us with religious data, it is because they were sung to earn

the patronage of chieftains by eulogizing, sometimes

unduly their achievements. There is however the

Paripāṭal, where a poet like
Nallantuvanār shows himself
versed in Vedic and Purāṇic lore.³

poraneity with Talaiyālaṅkānattup-pāṇṭyan is
unmistakable. See

Puṇam, st. 72.

1 Cantos v, ix and xiv.

2 Canto v, ll. 179-81.

3 E.g., the opening lines of poem 8;
cf. also poem 3.

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XVI

THE AUTHOR OF THE POEM
Iṅkō was the younger son of king

Cēralātaṇ, and his-

elder brother was the Cēra king
Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ celebrated

in the *Cilappatikāram*. The word *Iṭaṅkō*
means the

younger prince, and perhaps it was more
a title than a

proper name. But what his real name was
we cannot say

with any certainty. This young prince,
who belonged

to a distinguished family connected by
marriage alliances

with the other ruling dynasties of
South India and

who was blessed with fortune and wealth,
was destined

to give up the pleasures of royalty and
to take to a

life of renunciation and self-sacrifice. This
came to pass

as follows.

One day, when the king Cēralātaṇ was sitting in the

audience hall, there came to the court an astrologer who

predicted the immediate death of the reigning monarch

and the passing of the throne to his younger son. It

was an age of faith in astrology. The prediction was

a rude shock to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ, the elder son of the king

and the heir-apparent to the throne. Iḷaṅkō noticed this,

and in order that his brother might enjoy the honour

attached to the throne, became a monk so that he could

not be king.¹ The assumption of holy orders was

to assure his brother that he would not stand to the

way of his hopes and aspiration. As a monk should, he left his palace for the *kōṭṭam* (usually situated in a suburb); and his residence came to be called Kuṇavāyir-kōṭṭam.¹

1 Some biographers of Aśoka have misunderstood the real significance of Indian monastic life, and have wrongly styled him a monk-emperor.

2 Canto xxx, ll. 174-85.

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CILAPPATIKĀRAM

ILĀNKŌ, THE HISTORIAN

Ilānkō led a secluded life, but a few scholars visited him now and then. His friend and companion was

Kūlavāṇikaṇ Cittalai Cāttanār, the celebrated Caṅkam poet and the great author of the *Maṇimēkalai*, another epic of

no mean repute to which references have already been

made. From the *Patirruppattu* and other Caṅkam works like the *Puranānūru* and

Akanānūru anthologies, we gain
 an idea of the contemporary poets and
 scholars. Paraṇar - to whom is attributed the fifth
 Ten was a contemporary of
 Iṇkō. So also were Kapilar and others.
 Well qualified
 for the task as a member of an important
 royal family of
 the Tamil land, Iṇkō, in his retirement,
 wrote what may be called a contemporary
 history of the three chief Tamil dynasties, and
 even planned to continue the epic *Maṇimē-*
kalai himself. But having heard that Cātṭaṇār
 had begun
 and completed the work, he contented
 himself with the
 composition of the *Cilappatikāram*.¹ Like the
 other poets
 of his age, he did not go from court to
 court eulogizing
 one chieftain after another. Iṇkō's task was
 to write a

history, and if we bear in mind the impartiality with which

he has described the Cōḷa and the Pāṇṭya chiefs, one has

to conclude that he has in no way exaggerated the achieve-

ments of his brother. Thanks, then, to Iḷaṅkō, we have

reliable material for reconstructing the history of the period.

HIS RELIGION

We need not enter again into the controversy regard-

ing the age in which Iḷaṅkō lived. From what we have said of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan it follows that Iḷaṅkō also must be

assigned to the latter half of the second century A D. But

1 See the *patikam* to the *Cilappatikāram*.

far more important is the question of his religious faith.

The term Kuṇavāyirkōṭṭam is interpreted by Aṭiyark-

kunallār as Arukaṅkōil, the name generally given to the

Jaina temples. From this and from the term Aṭikaḷ

being used as a suffix to his name, the late Mr. Kanaka-

sabhai opined that Iḷaṅkō was a monk of the Nirgrantha

sect of the Jains.¹

But this question is largely interwoven with the faith

adopted and adhered to by his brother Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ.

Aṭikaḷ is a term of respect, and is in use even today among

saints, seers and holy men to whatever faith they may belong. Again, the term *kōṭṭam* is a general name for temple, and cannot be said to denote particularly a Jaina temple. 2

While we are examining this question it is necessary to call in the testimony of another datum that goes to establish his religion beyond doubt. This is the fact of Iṣaṅkō's attending the Vedic sacrifice elaborately performed by his brother after his return from his northern expedition. A follower of the Jaina cult, with his watchword of *ahimsa*, could not be expected to attend a function like the Vedic

sacrifice. This, together with his presence on the occasion of the founding of the Pattinī cult, conclusively

shows the Iṭāṅkō was a follower of the orthodox religion

like his brother Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. We have already seen that

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was a follower of orthodox Hinduism. In

fact, his very birth was due to special prayers offered to

Siva.³ But his was not the Caivism of the rabid type.

He worshipped Viṣṇu also. To him there was no differ-

1 See V. Kanakasabhai, *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, p. 208.

2 Canto ix, l. 9 ff.

3 Canto xxvi, ll. 98-9.

ence between Siva and Viṣṇu. Senkuṭṭuvan's religion was what is known in the Sanskrit texts as the *sanātana-dharma*. He was a tolerant Hindu monarch. He was

the originator of the cult of the Pattini, to which Iṇāṅkō not only assented, but heartily co-operated in its accomplishment. One cannot make out any difference in his description between one particular sect and another. It is the view of the learned editor Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar that Saivism was the religion of Iṇāṅkō.¹ While agreeing in the main with this view, we may respectfully point out that at the time of which we are speaking, there were no cut and dried sects like Saivism and Vaiṣṇavism. It would be therefore more appropriate to say that he was a follower of the established faith of the land, which we may call Hinduism in its broader sense.

XVII

COMMENTATORS AND
COMMENTARIES:

ARUMPATAVURAIYĀCIRIYAR

It is unfortunate that we have not been able to dis-

cover the name and age of the distinguished commentator of the *Cilappatikāram*, well known as Arumpatavuraiyāciriya. Though no clue is forthcoming for the identification of this commentator, this much is certain that his literary special

attainments were of a high order, and that his knowledge of musical treatises was undoubted.

This commentary *Arumpatavurai* is the older of the two

extant commentaries, the other being that of Aṭiyārka-

kunallār. The excellence of the commentary is due to the

fact that it explains fully the technical terms and phrases

in the text, and interprets them in the light of their actual

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use in the Caṅkam epoch.

Though only words and phrases which require interpretation are pressed into service, the commentary is complete, and throws welcome light on the portion of the text to which the comments of Aṭiyārkunallār are not available. In this way the commentary is useful and also valuable.

That Aṭiyārkunallār was indebted to this *Arumpata-vurai* is obvious from his own commentary, where in one place¹ he explicitly acknowledges the sources from which he has taken his material. Aṭiyārkunallār quotes him once by the name Arumpatavuraiyācīriyar. A study of the two extant commentaries shows how Aṭiyārkunallār has simply followed him in

many places, especially in the cantos which deal with the theory and practice of music. The greatness of the commentary lies in the fact that it furnishes rare and detailed notes on music and dancing. It is no exaggeration at all to say that without them nothing can be made out of the text. For, even with the two commentaries before us, it is difficult to get at the true interpretation of these technical terms relating to the art of music.

Arumpatavuraiyācīriyar's religion was, so far as can be gathered from the commentary, the established religion of the land, i.e. Hinduism. From the fact that he quotes the extant astrological work *Jinēndramālai* in connexion with *ārūdams*² it may be said that he lived after the author of the *Jinēndramālai*. But when the latter flourished is itself doubtful.

XVIII

ATĪYARKKUNALLAR

The other commentator is

Aṭiyārkunallār, who is supposed to have lived,
not without reason, in the fifteenth

1 Canto v, ll. 157-60, commentary.

2 Canto xvii, p. 443.

century A.D. As we have already said, he mentions Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar in one place and he has followed him in the main, sometimes adopting his very phrases and sentences. His is a commentary where due acknowledgment is made of the authorities from which he has taken his material. That he was a critical scholar and a researcher is seen from the portion of his commentary where he interprets the religion of the different characters in the epic, as also from his endeavour to fix the chronological limits of the exact day and time of Kōvalan's starting for Madura, etc. In pressing into service the astronomical data, though not in a way warranted by the original, the commentator shows himself an able astronomer and, we may add, an astrologer too. That he was an accomplished scholar and had made a special study of the musical

treatises is evident from the names of the originals which occur in the commentary. The books quoted from are *Intṛakāḷiyam*, *Pañcamarapu*, *Barataśēṇāpatiyam*, and *Mativāṇar-nāṭakattamiḷnūl*. It appears that these treatises, which were available to the commentator in his time, have been lost in the course of the last five centuries. The commentator is very meticulous about alien words, words in use in the *Malaināṭu* and the use of extinct pro-verbs. Such terms and expressions are interpreted with the care and the caution which they deserve. He also quotes an author *Kaviccakkaravartti*.¹ This may be a reference of *Cayamkoṇṭān*, the author of the *Kalinkattu-parāṇi*, or *Oṭṭa-Kūttar*, the author of a *parāṇi* on *Vikrama-cōla* as testified to us by the commentator on the *Takkayā-kapparaṇi*.

THE COMMENTARY INCOMPLETE

But it is unfortunate that the whole of the commentary is not available.

It is not available in respect of the cantos.

1 Canto v, ll. 76-88, commentary.

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entitled 'Kāṇalvari', 'Vajakkuraikātai',
'Vaṇcinamālai',
'Aḷarpaṭukātai' and 'Kaṭṭuraikatai', and
the whole of
'Vaṇcikkāṇṭam'.¹

Two explanations can be offered. One is
that he did

not write a commentary on these cantos and
the other is

that these portions have been lost. The
latter theory

seems more plausible in view of the
internal evidence

which can be gathered from the
commentary. The fol-

lowing may be adduced.²

(1) In his gloss on the term *vari* in 'Araṅkērukātai',

he says more details are furnished in 'Kāṇalvari'.³

(2) Again, in the same *katai*, in his gloss on the *yaḷ*

(1. 26) he says that an elaborate examination of it is made in

'Kāṇalvari'.⁴

(3) In commenting on lines 27-8 of 'Vēṇirkātai' he

remarks that he has spoken of it before under *aṇi* etc. This

aṇi is in the original text of 'Kāṇalvari', l. 3.

(4) Again, in commenting on lines 106-7 of 'Araṅ-

kērukātai', the remark is made that it would be examined

in extenso in 'Aḷarpaṭukātai'.⁵

(5) Further, in his comment on lines 45-71 of

'Vēṇirkātai' he refers to the fact that

additional details are

given in 'Kaṭṭuraikātai', and a reference may be made to

it.⁶

1 Cantos xxiv-xxx.

2 *Sila.*, preface, p. 20.

3 *ibid.*, p. 88.

4 *ibid.*, p. 100.

5 p. 116.

6 p. 237.

C-7

It is thus established that
Aṭiyārkunallar certainly
wrote his commentary on all the *kātais*, and
that the work
as a complete one is now lost to us.
Though we have
no internal evidence to substantiate the
theory that he
also wrote a commentary on

‘Vañcikkāṇṭam’, yet in the
light of his remarks quoted above, and in view
of the fact
that some portions of the commentary which
according to
him were actually written were lost, it is
reasonable to
assume that the commentator wrote a full
commentary
which is not traceable now. It may be that
one day we
shall find it in some private library in an
out-of-the-way
village.

HIS RELIGION

Though there are no definite
data regarding the religion
of the commentator, the assumption may
be made that
he was a Saiva by faith. His leanings towards
Jainism can
be proved by his interpretation of the
common terms as

referring to the Jaina in many a place. To quote one example, he makes the *kōṭṭam* in the *Kuṇavāyirkōṭṭam* *Arukaṅkōil*, which has afforded some foundation for the theory that *Iṇaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ*, who made it his residence, must have been a Jain.

VALUE OF COMMENTARIES

In examining the value of these annotations as sources of information of the early history of the ancient Tamil kingdoms, the late P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar was not prepared to attach any importance to them.¹ But this view of the learned author cannot stand. It may be true to some extent that the commentary is coloured by personal views,

but generally the annotator aims at giving the interpreta-

1. *History of the Tamils*, pp. 371-2.

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tion handed down by an unbroken tradition, without the help of which no intelligible meaning could be attached to several underlying allusions or references. If this interpretation can be corroborated by an independent source, it compels our acceptance and approval¹.

source

Examining the work in this light, and remembering the paucity of the materials for reconstructing the history of early South India, we must ever be grateful to these annotators, whose authority cannot be questioned inasmuch as their works are quoted by the still more celebrated later annotators. Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar is inclined to the view that Naccinārkkiṇiyar was one such annotator who quotes Aṭiyārkkuṇallar.² If this is so, it speaks well of the authority, value and standing of our commentator

on the epic.

1 See S. K. Aiyangar, *Evolution of Hindu Administrative*

Institutions in South India, p. 14.

2 For example cf, the lines மறை
முதுமுதல்வன் பின்னர்.....

பொருப்பன் of 'Vēṭṭuvavari' with ll. 40-2 of
Maturaikkāñci, commentary.

CILAPPATIKARAM

PATIKAM

THE hill-Kuravas came in a group
before Kuṭakkōc-

Cēral Iḷaṅkō¹ who had renounced his
royalty and was

permanently residing in the hermitage of
Kuṇavāyil² and

said: 'A chaste lady who had lost a
breast came to the

shade of the *vēṅkai* tree, rich in its golden
flowers; there

the King of the Dēvas appeared, to show
her her loving

husband, and took her to Heaven before
our very eyes.

This was verily a wonder. Be gracious to
know this!'

At that time, the great Tamil poet
Cāttan,³ who was

by his side, exclaimed, 'I know how this
happened', and

began to narrate the details. 'In the
ancient city of un-

dying fame, Pukār, belonging to the Cōḷa
wearing the *ātti*

garland,⁴ there was a merchant, named
Kōvalaṇ.⁵ He

lost his great wealth by dalliance with a
dancing-girl who

was expert in her art. His wife was
Kaṇṇaki. With the

1 The younger brother of Seṅkuṭṭuvaṇ.

2 The term in the text is
Kuṇavāyirkōṭṭam. Aṭiyārkkun-
nallār describes *kōṭṭam* as a Jaina temple. But
this does not seem

to be correct. The term *kōṭṭam* (Sans.,
kōṣṭha) means any

building sacred to any divinity and not
particularly to Arukaṇ,

the Jaina deity. Kuṇavāyil (literally, east gate),
was the name

of the suburb to the east of Vañci.

3 The Caṅkam poet and author of the
Maṇimēkalai.

4 *Ātti*=*bauhinia racemosa*. The Tamil
kings were distin-

guished by the garlands they wore. The Cōla
king had the *ātti*,

the Pāṇṭya and the Cēra kings used the margosa
and the palmyra
respectively.

5 Sans., Gopāla.

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intention of selling her tinkling anklet he went with her
to the great Pāṇṭyan city of Madura, highly renowned
in literature. When he was taking it for sale in
the great bazaar he happened
to show it to a goldsmith who said that it was
fit to be worn only by the queen and not by
any one else. Asking Kōvalan to stay there
the goldsmith went to, and told, the king that
he saw the queen's anklet (which the goldsmith
himself had previously stolen) in the hands of
the thief. Since that was the moment
when Kōvalan's destiny was being fulfilled, the
king who wore the garland of margosa blossoms
did not inquire into the matter fully, but
ordered his tried watchmen to kill the thief

and fetch the anklet. The wife of the murdered Kōvalan having no refuge, shed tears copiously; and because she was so very virtuous, the Pāṇṭya suffered great distress when she plucked out one of her breasts, on which lay a string of pearls, and thereby burnt the great city of Madura. That lady of chastity of high repute is this one (referred to by the Kuravas)'.
1

Hearing this, Ilāṅkō asked: 'You said that destiny was fulfilled.¹ How was that?'

In reply, Cattan said, 'Holy man, listen! I lay down at midnight in the Veḷḷiyambalam² of the Maṇrappotiyil,

1 This is the central theme underlying the whole epic. The story seems to elucidate the fundamental belief of Hinduism and its dissenting sects, like Buddhism and Jainism, that a man's fortune or misfortune in this birth is the result of his actions, good or bad, in past birth or

births.

2 Velliambalam (literally, silver hall) is an open space for the use of the public. Note there are Ponnambalam, Maniyambalam, etc., referring to particular shrines. The term Manrappotiyl shows that the village assembly usually met in the temple compound, where it is natural to suppose that large and shady trees were planted and allowed to grow.

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sacred to Lord Siva who wears the *konrai* flower on His tuft, in the hoary city of Madura of untainted fame. I saw the tutelary deity of Madura appearing before the heroic Pattini who was in deep distress and saying: "O lady, who raised furious flames from your breast! Now it is that the action of your previous birth has become completed. In your previous birth, the wife of the merchant Caṅkaman of Cīṅkapuram¹ of undying fame laid a curse upon your husband

and yourself. O lady of the beautiful tresses of hair! You will see your husband (again) fourteen days from now, not in his human form, but in the divine." This guileless account did I hear. So we shall write a poem, with songs, illustrating the three truths that *dharma* will become the God of Death to kings who swerve from the path of righteousness, that it is natural for great men to adore a chaste lady of great fame, and that destiny will manifest itself and be fulfilled; and as these truths centre round an anklet of artistic beauty, the poem (*pāṭṭuṭaicceyyu!*) can be named *Cilappatikāram*. As this story relates to all the three crowned monarchs, it is only proper, O venerable saint, that you should write it.'

In response to this request of Cattan, the saint of extraordinary repute (*Iḷaṅkō*) composed a poem, consisting of thirty parts, which were the following: The song of benediction; the story about the parents establishing the hero

as a householder; the story of the dancing-girl Mātavi receiving royal recognition for her skill on the stage; the chapter in praise of the twilight; the canto narrating the celebration of Indra's festival in the city; the canto describing the sports on the seashore; the section describing the

kāṇalvari and Mātavi's sorrow at the heat caus-

1

Ciṅkapuram is one of the capitals of ancient Kālīṅka.

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ed by the blazing sun; the canto dealing with the sight of the city (Madura) and that of the forest; the canto dealing with the song of the hunters and the sojourn of Kōvalan with his spouse outside the city; the section dealing with the visit to the city; the section describing the

shelter found for the fair lady Kaṇṇaki; the account of the murder of Kōvalan; the canto in which the dance of the cowherdesses is described; that dealing with the distress of the people who heard the news of the burning of the city; the song (*kātai*) dealing with the entry into the city which was in utter turmoil; the canto describing the manner in which Kaṇṇaki presented her case before the king; the vow, the story of the great conflagration, the facts revealed by the tutelary deity of Madura to Kaṇṇaki; the dance of the hill-damsels wearing fragrant flowers; the story of the seeing, taking and bathing of the slab of stone in the holy Ganges, and the planting of the image; the story of the praise offered to, and the boon obtained from, the Goddess of Chastity.

These stories which are narrated in poetic form
{uraiyiṭaiyiṭṭa pāṭṭuṭaicceyyuḷ} by
 Iḷaṅkō-Aṭigaḷ were heard by Kūlavāṇikan¹
 Cattan of Madura. This is the

account of the origin of the poem which elaborates the *trivarga* (*pālvakai*).²

1 This indicates that Cāttan belonged to the community of corn-chandlers. The term *vāṇiya* is from the Sanskrit *vaṇik* a merchant. Though a common name etymologically for all merchants, it is used in practice only in connexion with oil-pressers. Amongst the other *vāṇiyas* there were *ilaivaṇiyas* or betelsellers and numerous other branches. *Kūlavāṇiyas* are said to have dealt in grain.

2 The *trivarga* are *dharma* (Tam., *aṭam*), *artha* (Tam., *poruḷ*) and *kāma* (Tam., *iṇbam*). The expression shows the naturalization of the idea of *puṣārthas* in the Tamil land.

URAI PERUKATTURAI¹

1. From that day forth the Pāṇṭyan kingdom was deprived of rains, and famine-stricken. This was followed by fever and plague. Verrivercelayan² reigning at Korkai³

propitiated the Lady of Chastity by sacrificing a thousand goldsmiths, and celebrated a festival when there was a downpour causing fertility to the land. Thereupon the kingdom was rid of disease and distress.

2. Hearing this, the Iṣam-Kōcar⁴ of the Koṅkunaṭu⁵ instituted festivities in honour of the Lady of Chastity in their land, and this resulted in plentiful rains.

3. On hearing this, Gajabāhu⁶ of Ceylon encircled by the sea, built a shrine for the Lady of Chastity where daily sacrifices were performed. Thinking that she would

1 This was added to *patikam* by an early editor whose identity is not known.

2 The successor of Neṭuñceliyaṇ.

3 Quondam capital of the Pāṇṭyaṇ kingdom.

It was the same as Kavāṭapuram (seaport capital) referred to in the

Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

4 The smaller chieftains of Tamiḷnāṭu. Their services were

requisitioned by great kings like the Pāṇṭyan.
(See *Maturaik-kāñci*, ll 773-4.)

5 This is to be identified as the western part of the Koṅku region: Tuḷunāṭu, Coorg and parts of Mysore. This may be called Kōcarnāṭu.

6 The Cēra King Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's contemporary in Ceylon.

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remove the distress (of his land), he also instituted annual festivals commencing with the month of Āṭi; then the rains came to stay, and increased the fertility of the land so as to produce unfailing crops.

4. At this the Cōḷa king Perumkiṭṭi¹ built at Uṟaiyūr a shrine for Pattinikkaṭavuḷ, and instituted daily offerings, thinking that she would

shower her blessings at all times.

1. The contemporary Cola king.

NURCIRAPPUPPAYIRAM

Veṇpā

THE unexcelled language of the *opus* of the ascetic Cēraṇ, the prince of Kuṭanāṭu, highly spoken of by the people of Kūṭal (Madura), resembles a range of hills with its group of peaks as seen in a mirror.¹

Kaṭṭalaikkalitturai

The crown-jewel of the great Cēra composed the *Cilappatikāram*, much appreciated

by the people of Pūm-pukār, which was the residence of wealthy merchants who formed one of the four famous castes created by the four-faced Lord (Brahmā), and which was the dwelling-place of authorities on Tamil literature.

1. This and the following stanza appear to be ancient compositions, but it is not possible to trace their authorship.

I. PUKARKKANTAM

CANTO I

MANKALAVALTUPPATAL

OR

THE SONG OF BENEDICTION

Praised be the Moon! ¹ Praised be the

Moon, for, like

the cool white umbrella of the king who
wears the pollen-

spreading garland, He blesses our beautiful
world.

Praised be the Sun! Praised be the
Sun, for, like the

commands of the Lord of the Kāvērīnāṭu,
He revolves
round the golden-peaked Mēru.

Praised be the mighty Clouds! Praised
be the mighty

Clouds, for, like him whose land the frightful
sea surrounds,

they stand on high, and pour their gifts to
men below.

Praised be sweet Pukār! Praised be
sweet Pukār,

for it is as famous as the glory of the (Cōḷa)
royal line all

over the wide world,

encircled by the waters of the sea.

1 For a similar Invocation of the deities see *Takkayā-kapparanī*, 'Kaṭavul', st. 9, comm. It may be noted that the first deity invoked is the Moon, thus bearing testimony to the prevalence of the moon cult in ancient Tamil India.

2 Pukār, Kākandī, Kāvīrippūmpaṭṭinam, and Paṭṭinam, are

other names for Kāvērippaṭṭinam, the ancient capital city of the

Colas on the seashore. According to some, it is the *Khāberis*:

Emporium mentioned by Ptolemy in the first century A.D. The

inscriptions secured from the modern Kāvērippaṭṭinam and its

vicinity leave no doubt as to its identity with Kāvīrippūmpaṭṭinam,

alias Pukār. (*An. Rep- Ep.*, 1919, p. 92.)

Those who have fully heard and known all that is to be

heard and known,¹ hold the view that, like
the Potiyil hill²

and the Himalayan range, the unique
city of Pukār,

renowned for its generations of unexcelled
ancient families,

stands immutable as the great ones who live
there.

In that city of Pukār which equalled
Heaven in its fame

and the Serpent World³ in its enjoyments,
there lived a

celebrated sea-captain (*mānāikaṇ*),⁴ liberal in
his gifts like

the rain-bearing clouds. He had a
daughter, Kaṇṇaki,⁵

1 The term *kēḷvi* in l. 19 may also be
interpreted as the

Sruti or the Vēdic lore. It occurs in the sense of
the Vēdas in

Paṭiṭṭ., third Ten, st. 1, l. 1.

2 The Potiyil hill

is noted as the residence of the sage

Agastya (*Bhāga. Pur.*, Bk. X, ch. 79, st. 16-17).
This hill of the

Pāṇtyas can be identified with the Malaya,
otherwise known as

Chandanādri or Candanācala. Perhaps the epithet
Malayadhvaja

attributed to the Pāṇtyan king in the *Mhb.*, Bk.
III, ch. 281, st.

44f (ch. *Raghu*, canto iv, st. 46-9) is after the hill
Malaya. The

Tamil name Potikai is the original of the
Bettigo of Ptolemy

(J. W. MacCrindle, *Ptolemy* 1885, p. 78).

3 Nākanāṭu; also Pavaṇam.

According to the Jaina scrip-

tures the joys in the Nākaloka are
greater than those in heaven or

Svargaloka: cf. *Mhb.*, 'Ādi', ch. 234.

4 The terms *mānāikaṇ* (Sans.,
mahānāyaka = great leader)

and *mācāttuvāṇ* (Sans., *mahāśārtha*)
connote respectively

'members of maritime commercial ventures'
and 'members of

caravan trade': see canto ii, ll. 7-8; also *Studies in*

5 It is to be noted here that the heroine of the story has been mentioned first and then the hero. This is because the story from start to finish centres round the heroine. Or to a custom in ancient India of speaking first of the it may point wife and then of the husband in referring to a married couple (*vadhūvara*), e.g., Sitarāma, Pārvatī Paramēśvara.

MANKALAVATTUPPATAL

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who was like a golden creeper and was¹ nearing twelve years old. She had high qualities on account of which women adored and praised her, exclaiming, 'She is Lakṣmī'² of praiseworthy form, seated on the lotus, and her excellence is that of the faultless

northern star (Arun-tati).³

In that selfsame city lived an inland merchant prince (*mācāttuvāṇ*) of abounding wealth, who, along with his relations, was placed in the foremost rank of the aristocracy by the monarch of that great kingdom. He was, in sooth, the lord of a rich treasure⁴ and gave away his earnings to others in need. He had a son, named Kōvalan,⁵ nearing sixteen years. Kōvalan's expanding fame made the earth

1 The term *akavaiyāḷ* means that she was not years old.

yet twelve

2

Consort of Viṣṇu and Goddess of Wealth.

3 Aruntati is the wife of the sage Vasiṣṭha, one of the seven celebrated sages who went by the name of Saptarṣis. She was distinguished for her chastity.

Chaste women are generally compared to Aruntati (see *Patir.*, fourth Ten. st. 1, l. 28). The *Bōdhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* rules that a married couple should see the star Aruntati and the

Pole Star on the first day of their marriage (*Govt. Oriental Series, Mysore, 1904, p. 124*). Legend has it that each of the seven primeval sages had his own wife. Of these the wives of six

sages excluding that of Vasiṣṭha fell in love with Agni and gave their breast-milk to Subrahmanya. These six became Kṛittika Nakṣhatras which are six in number (the Pleiades ; but Aruntatī stood firm in her chastity and attained an honourable place as an

auspicious star fit to be seen by chaste and pure women so that they might ever lead holy lives. (*Mhb., 'Vana Parva', ch. 226-30.*

Also S. Sorenson's *Index*, p. 91).

4 It may be interpreted as twofold treasure and the comparison may be to Kubēra, the Lord of Divine Treasure, Saṅkha and Padma.

5 Note here also the term *akavaiyān*.

all too small to bear it. Moon-faced maidens, skilled in song and sweet in voice, fondly said to each other, 'O, He is Subrahmanya incarnate !' and revealed their excessive love for him

when they spoke in praise of him in their own gatherings.

Them, (Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalan), their worthy parents longed to see, on a happy day, as a bridal pair. Happy in such thoughts, they sent forth fair maidens, seated on an elephant's neck, to invite to the wedding all those who lived in that great city.

As they went forth into the streets, drums were beaten: *mirudangams* were sounded: conches were blown: and white umbrellas were lifted high as if in kingly procession. O, how enchanting was their entry into the pavilion, glimmering with pearls beneath the canopy of blue silk and with dazzling pillars, decked with diamonds and beautified by overhanging garlands! That was the day on which the Moon moving in the sky approached the star Rōkiṇī;*

1 He is the War-God in whose honour Kālidāsa wrote his classic *Kumārasambhava*. He is

a very popular deity in Tamil. In dia (see T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, p. 415), According to *Tolk.*, he is the tutelary deity of the hillmen (*kuṟiñcini am*) (*Akam.*, *sūtra* 5). Among the Caṅkam works the *Tirumurukāṟruppāṭai* and one-fourth of the *Paripāṭal*

are sung in glorification of Kumāra. Incidentally it may be noticed that the arguments in favour of a later date for the *Paripāṭal* (seventh century A.D.), on the basis of astronomical data, put forward by the late Swamikannu Pillai (see *Indian Ephemeris*, Vol. I, Pt. II, Appendix III; 'The Chronology of Early Tamil Literature', and further examined by K. G. Sankara in *J.R.A.S.*, 1932, pp. 541-5), are not tenable in the light of other and more positive data.

2 Cf *Akam.*, st. 136. That Rōkiṇi is an auspicious planet is attested to by Vēdic authority (*Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 415), not 40 s peak of the later *Bṛhat-Jātaka* and similar literature. Rōkiṇi,

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when Kōvalan who walked around the holy fire,¹ in accordance with scriptural injunctions as directed by the revered priest, approached his bride, divinely fair, resembling the star Aruntati. How fortunate were those who enjoyed such a splendid sight! Lovely maidens, bringing spices and flowers, spake and sang, and looked bewitching. Women with full breasts and glowing tresses took with them sandal-paste, frankincense, perfumes and powders. Ladies with lovely teeth bore lamps, vessels, and *pālikai* pots² of tender shoots. These maidens, who looked like golden creepers and whose hair was decked with flowers, showered blossoms on the bridal pair, saying: 'May you live a flawless life, with a love that knows no separation, and held in close and unrelaxing embrace!' They then led Kannaki, the Aruntati of this vast world, to the auspicious nuptial bed with the prayer that the royal tiger-emblem, engraved on this side of the Himalayas, might remain for ever on the

moreover, was the favourite of the twenty-seven wives of the Moon.

1. The fire-rite was already in vogue in the Tamil land for purposes of marriage. It seems to have been a regular institution ever since the age of *Talk*. Aruntati (Sans., Arundhati) is the star Alcor in the Great Bear. She was the daughter of Kāśyapa, sister of Nārada, and wife of Vasiṣṭha. As the model of conjugal felicity she figures in the Sāstraic literature. The reference indicates the adoption by the Tamil Vaiśyas of the Aryan marital custom and procedure. It is worth noting that Kaṇṇaki was barely twelve at the time of her marriage.

2 *Pālikai* pots are the chief feature of marriage and other *samskāras* among the Hindus even today. The *Bōdhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra* mentions five *pālikais* for purposes of marriage. The technical term *ankurārpaṇa* (p. 328 of the Mysore edition), probably suggests that the married couple should be

good and healthy progeny.

C—8

blessed with

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golden crest of that mountain,¹ and that the Cōla king (Cempian)² who possessed the fierce javelin in battle, might throw his matchless discus³ all over the world.

1 The reference here is to Karikāla's engraving the tiger crest on the Himalayas. For a learned study on the life and achievements of Karikāla see Ulakanātham Pillai, *Karikālaiccōlar*, in Tamil. If we compare these lines with canto v, ll. 90-104, there is the implication that Karikāla was not satisfied with being the overlord of all India and his ambition was to cross the snow-clad hills and to extend his conquests to Tibet, China, etc. (Note the terms *ippāl* and *uppāl*.) But the Himalayas were a stumbling block; he could not proceed further and had to return. Pandit M.

Raghava Aiyangar

is of opinion that the Cōla king's route lay through the passes between Sikkim and Bhutan, leading to the Chambi Valley in Tibet.

This is attested to by the fact that even today one of the passes there, and the mountain range as well, go by the name of the Cōla Pass and the Cōla Range. (*Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 'Sikkim', Vol. X, p. 327, Vol. XXII, p. 365. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. V, p. 667, s. v. Sikkim, Vol. XX, p. 640.) *Kalaimakal* (Madras), Vol. I, p. 56 ff.

2

Cempiyan is an epithet for the Cōla king. The tradition transmitted in Tamil literature bears evidence to the fact that one of the great ancestors of the Cōlas was Cipicakravarti, and as coming from his family, the Cōlas claimed the title Cempiyan. If this tradition has any value at all, it demonstrates that the Cōla dynasty is only a branch of a North Indian dynasty of which Cipi was an honoured member. But there are scholars who look upon this dynasty as indigenous to South India.

3

An emblem of universal sovereignty.

CANTO II
MANAIYARAMPATUTTA KATAI
OR

SETTING UP HOME

THE untold wealth of the seafaring merchants of the rich city (Pukār) made even far-famed monarchs covet it. The varieties of foreign merchandise, rare commodities brought to the city by ships and caravans, were so vast that, even if the whole world, encircled by the roaring seas, flocked into it, its wealth would not become diminished.

In the delights which it yielded, and in the presence of noble persons, (the parents of) Kāṇṇaki the lotus-eyed and her loving husband Kōvalan, who were nobly born and blessed with inexhaustible ancestral wealth, the city resembled Uttarakuru,¹ the residence of

great penance-performers.

In the middle story of their lofty mansion, they (Kōvalaṇ and Kaṇṇaki) seated themselves on a gem-legged couch which looked as if it had been made for them by

Maya.² As they were enjoying themselves, the

1 The Uttarakuru (*Vedic Index*, p. 84) is perhaps the semi-mythical region of enjoyment and bliss. Six such places are distinguished also in the Jaina literature. See *Divākaram*, st. 12

For a similar description of the Uttarakuru, see *Mhb.*, 'Sabhā Parva', ch. 29, st. 66-71. The *Aitarēya Brāhamāṇa* locates it as a trans-Himalayan country (ch. 8, st. 14).

According to Pliny, Bk. VI, c. 17, Amometus wrote a book on the Attacorae (Uttarakuru). See J. W. MacCrindle, *Megasthenes and Arrianā*

1926, pp. 76-9.

2 Though Atiyārkunallār interprets the term Mayāṇ as the Carpenter of the Gods, Sanskrit tradition has it that Viśvakarma

soft south wind entered, at the proper time with the bees, through the lattice windows ornamented with a series of jewelled hangings, bringing the sweet fragrance of the cool *āmpal*, the close-petalled *kuvaḷai*, the half-opened lotus filled with humming drones, and several other flowers which blossomed in fields and on the surface of small pools, to wit, the pleasing *tāḷai* and the white wide-mouthed *kōtai*, and blew over them. Along with it came the drones which had partaken of the tiny particles of *māṭavi* from the arbour of the *campaka*, and which were in eager search for the sweet-smelling tresses of the charming damsel with her beaming face.

(Bathed in such a breeze), the couple passed out into the open terrace where, under the cool rays of the moon, the God of Love sat holding his arrow of flowers. There they laid themselves down in a bed covered with pollen attracting humming bees. Kōvalan amused himself by painting, on the

broad shoulders of his lady-love, the sugar-cane¹ and the *vaḷḷi*², when they looked like the sun and the moon shedding their lustre upon the whole sea-girt world. He wore a garland of jasmine whose sparkling white petals had been opened by the honey-seeking bee. Hers was a garland of the charming close-petalled *kalunir*. With their wreaths intertwined owing to their close embrace, both of unsatiated love grew wearied when Kōvalan looked into the beaming face of Kaṇṇaki, and spoke to her in words of prattling endearment

was the architect of the Gods, and Maya was the architect of the Asuras.

1. The bow of the God of Love is said to be of sugar-cane.

2. *Vaḷḷi* is evidently the heavenly creeper known as *kāmavallī*. Cf. *Jivakacintāmapī*, st. 365, where the *kāmavallī* is compared to a lovely lady.

‘My dear, though Civa has adorned his tuft of hair by placing the beautiful crescent moon¹ in it so that the gods may praise him. He will yet give it away to you so as to make it your forehead: for, was not the moon born along with you?’

‘Likewise the bodyless God of Love will be happy to give you his big sugar-cane bow, so that it may become your dark eyebrows; for, is it not a law of warfare that the vanquished foe should yield up his weapons? ‘Indra too is bound to give you his thunderbolt² which protects the Dēvas, saying that it will fittingly become your waist, for, were you not born long before ambrosia?

‘Though the six-faced one (Subrahmaṇya) has no cause

for doing it, still He has given you his long lance, red as

fire, so as to form your two dark, cloudlike, red-cornered

eyes; he naturally wishes to see me in distress!

1 This is apparently a reference to the *aṣṭāmicandra*, i. e. the crescent of the eighth lunar day, which is generally compared to the forehead of beautiful ladies. Among the *Sahasranāma* of

the Dēvi, one is *aṣṭāmicandrābibhrāja dalikasthalaśōbhita*.

2 The reference is to the legend of the churning of the ocean

by the Dēvas and the Asuras for nectar which the former drank and became immortal. With the nectar came also the Moon and

the Goddess of Wealth.

To Kōvalaṇ, Kaṇṇaki is none else than this Lakṣhmī.

See *Mhb.* ‘Ādi’, ch. 17-19 for a fuller description; also S. Sorenson’s *Index*, pp. 34-5.

3 Like nectar, Indra's Vajra or thunderbolt is said to have sprung from out of the churning ocean. It is a two-headed trident with a slender handle in the middle, which is compared here to the lady's waist. According to the Sanskrit tradition, it was the bone of the sage Dadhici that was transformed into the Vajra, the war-implement of Indra. (See *Mhb.*, 'Vanaparva', ch. 99; *Salyaparva*, ch. 52.)

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CILAPPATIKARAM

'By your complexion you have put to shame the gem-

tinted peacock with its beautiful black plumes, which hides

itself in the woods. O lady of the shining face! By your

soft and lovely gait you have put to shame the swan which

hides itself amidst the lotuses of the cool tank. The little

green parrots are ashamed of themselves when they listen

to your charming voice which assumes the character of

the flute, *vīṇā*, and ambrosia : yet,
O lady of stately

gait, they love to stay for ever on your
flower-like hands.

‘O lady with charming tresses fragrant
with flowers!

Of what use to you are dressing maids
and ornaments

other than your flawless *tāli*?¹ Again,
beyond a few

flowers to be worn on your black hair, what
need is there

for any splendid wreath of flowers? Nor
does your hair

require any paste of *kastūri*. Common
frankincense is

quite sufficient. Likewise with the
sandal-paste figures

painted on your beautiful breasts, there is no
need for a

string of pearls. What folly induced them
to deck you

with so many ornaments causing drops
of perspiration on

your face, and pain to your slender waist!

O purest gold! O conch-white pearl!

O faultless fragrance! O sugar-cane,
honey!

Unattainable beauty, life-giving nectar!

O noble child of nobly-born merchants!

1 The

commentators seem to interpret the term *maṅkalavaṇī*
as natural beauty, and this may fit in with the
context. The

other interpretation of *maṅkalavaṇī* is *tālī* or
tirumāṅkalyam, the

wearing of which on the occasion of a marriage
seems to have

been originally a South Indian custom, later
adopted by the

followers of the Brahmanical religion. Cf. canto
iv. 1. 50. See,

for instance, the chapter in the *Rāmāyaṇa* describing

the marriage

of Rāma and Sītā (Bk. I, ch. 73), where there is no mention of

māṅkalya-sūtram. The term *sūtram* in the sense of *tālī* occurs in the later *Smṛtis*.

MANAIYARAMPATUTTAKATAI

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Shall I say that you are an unborn
gem of the

hills?

Shall I say that you are nectar
not produced

from the sea?

Shall I say that you are melody not
born of the

yālī?

O my girl of dark and flowing hair!

Uttering ceaselessly such well-worded

speeches, the

ecstatic lover with bright garlands, spent with
his fair lady-

love days and days in deep enjoyment.

One such day, the venerable lady
(mother of Kōvalan)

established the lady of abundant and
flowing tresses

(Kañṇaki) in a house of her own, where she
provided her

with faithful servants and wealth of all
kinds, so as to

serve¹ her near and dear ones, ascetics
and guests, in a

manner appropriate to the householder's
life, that thereby

her fame might increase.

Some years passed, and Kañṇaki in
the discharge of

her household duties earned a name worthy to
be praised.

They (Kōvalan and Kāṇṇaki), who (respectively) resembled Kāma (God of Love) and Rati (Goddess of Love), enjoyed close embraces like smoke-coloured serpents; they enjoyed all sorts of pleasures as if realizing the instability of life on the earth.²

1 The chief duties of the lady of a house were the giving of

gifts to the deserving, the serving of Brahmans, and the entertain-

ing of ascetics and guests, as evidenced by Kāṇṇaki's own words

in canto xvi. ll. 71-3. This is also the prescription of the

Dharmaśāstras or law-codes like that of Manu. A student of

Tiruvalluvar's *Tirukkuraḷ* will find elaborate prescriptions for the

above-mentioned duties of the householder.

2 The poet here hints at the coming tragedy.

CANTO III

ARANKERRUKATHI

OR

THE DEBUT

THE great sage (Agastya) of
the divine Potiyil hill
(once) cursed Indra's son¹
(along with Urvacī)², and the
latter obtained redemption by
displaying her skill on the
stage.³ From that distinguished line
of celestial nymphs,
was descended Mātavi, noted for
her deeds of great
distinction, as well as for her
broad shoulders and
beautiful tresses which scattered the
pollen of flowers.
In dance and song, and in grace of
form,⁴ she underwent
training for seven years,
succeeding in all three;
and at the age of twelve

she was in a position to display

1 Jayanta, the son of Indra, was cursed, together with Urvaci, by the sage Agastya for misbehaviour. Jayanta was reborn as a bamboo in the Vindhya Hills and Urvaci as a dancing-girl on the earth. According to the *Suddhāṇandappirakāśa*, a

late musical treatise, Urvaci was born first in the city of Kāñci.

2 Urvaci (Tam., Uruppaśi) is a daughter of the Gods (an *apsaras*). For the origin and career of Urvaci see *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 24, st. 25 ff. Cf. Dikshitar, *Matsya Purāṇa—a study*, 1935, pp. 42-3.

3 The term used is *talaikkōl*. It might be a staff used by the dancer to serve as an equipoise. For details see ll. 114 ff.

4 The chief requisites are dancing, singing and natural beauty (*aḷaku*). If *aḷaku* is interpreted as

an art, it may mean

'proper rhythm'. The period of training was seven years commencing from the age of five.

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her talents before the reigning king¹ who wore heroic anklets.

Her dancing master knew the characteristics of the

two schools of the dancing art.² He could effectively

combine the different dancing poses with the *vilakku*

song.³ He had a clear knowledge of the established rules

of the eleven modes of body-movement and limb-move-

ment (*āṭal*), of the songs (*pāṭṭu*),⁴ of the resounding instruments (*koṭṭu*), as also of the dance (*āṭal*), of gestures (*pāṭal*),⁵ of the measured beats (*pāṇi*),⁶ and of time-beats (*tūkku*).⁷

1 According to the commentator the king under reference is

Karikāla. But a study of the chronology of the early centuries

of the Christian era shows that the king referred to must have

been a successor to Karikāla. This has been examined in the Introduction.

2 The two schools are the *dēśi* (secular) and *mārga* (ortho-

dox), which are the two kinds of *kūttu*. There were a number of

kūttus which came under one category or the other. Like *kūttu*,

music was also classified as *dēśi* and *mārga*. (See Introduction

by M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar to his edition of the *Svaramēḷakalā-*

nidhi, Annamalai University, 1932).

3 Of the fourteen limbs of *vilakku* three are distinguished,

vēnūvilakku, *paṭaivilakku* and *ūrvilakku*. For details see Aṭiyār-

kunallār's commentary, *Sila.*, p. 82.

4

The expression *pāttu* here is a reference to the *Akam*, and

Puṇam, *nāṭakam*, or dramatic compositions.

5 The gestures of *pāṭal* are said to be of eight kinds.

6 This was either with the hands or a metal disk. Was the

Tamil technical expression *paṇ* derived from it? The earliest texts

of the *Tēvāram* and *Nālāyiraprapantam* classify the psalms accord-

ing to *paṇs*.

7 This *tūkkū* is said to be of seven kinds.

The reverbera-

tions are created by the manipulation of time-beats. Probably

pāṇi and *tūkkū* composed a full *tālam*.

During the course of the exhibition of the dancing art, composed of the foregoing elements, he knew when only one hand had to be used for gesticulation (*piṇṇi*),¹ and when both the hands had to be used (*piṇaiyaḷ*). He also knew when the hands had to be used for exhibiting action alone (*tolirṅkai*), and when for graceful effect alone (*eḷirṅkai*). Knowing as he did the conventions at the time of dancing, he avoided the mixing up of the single-hand demonstration (*kūṇṇai*) with the double-hand demonstration (*vāram*) and vice versa, as also the mixing up of pure gesture with gesticulatory movement and vice versa. In the movements of the feet also, he did not mix up the *kuravai* with the *vari*.² He was such an expert.

Her music teacher was likewise skilled in handling the *yāl*³ and the *kuḷal* (flute),⁴ in the technique of the *tāḷam*

1 The *piṇṇi* consisted of twenty-four exhibitions and the *piṇaiyal* of thirteen.

2 These are the *kuravaikkūttu* and the *varikkūttu*.

3 Four varieties of *yāl* are distinguished: *pēriyāl*, *makarayāl*, *śakōṭayāl*, and *śeṅkōṭṭiyāl* of 21, 19, 14 and 7 strings respectively.

(See also *Puram.*, st. 152, comment) It may be pointed out that

Sārṅgadēva's *viṇā* was of 22 strings, and that it was simplified by

Rāmāmātya (16th cent.) into one of seven strings, and by his

critic and successor Vāṅkaṭamakhi (17th cent.) into one of five

strings. We cannot say positively what was the type prevalent in

the Tamil country. The *yāl* was apparently the *viṇā*, known as

such because of the figure of the conventional lion

into which the

shaft was worked at the end. The terms *makarayaḥ* etc., give a

clue to it. The lute is an instrument going back to Vedic times.

4. The *kuḷal* was made of one of five materials, namely,

bamboo, sandal, bronze, red catechu, or coromandel ebony. Of

these, bamboo was regarded as the best material, bronze middling,

and others as distinctly inferior. The flute was as ancient an instrument as the lute and the drum.

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(timing), in the manipulation of the vocal chords, and in the production of the soft low note of the *mirutaṅkam*.¹ He could make all these sounds harmonize agreeably to the dance (*āṭal*). Knowing what music was appropriate to the *vari* and *āṭal*, he had the discriminating knowledge

of all the subtle sounds of the flawless *dēsikam* music. Because of his perfect knowledge he could elaborate upon and classify all varieties of dances and music, and still remain true to the spirit of their composers.

There was, again, the learned composer of songs whose knowledge of the Tamil language was complete and known to the whole Tamil land surrounded by the noisy sea.² An authority in the art of dramaturgy he had a knowledge of the two branches, *vēttiyal*³ and *potuviyal*⁴, and exhibited it in his compositions. Realizing the improper expressions employed by others (his rivals), he scrupulously avoided such defects in his own dramatic poetry.⁵

1 This is one of the thirty-one skin instruments of music.

2 Surrounded by sea on three sides and extending up to Vēṅkaṭam (modern Tirupati Hills) in the north and the Kumari in the south was the ancient Tamil land. Here three branches of Tamil literature were current.

3 The branch relating to *Akam*. in the dramatic com- position.

4 The branch relating to *Puram*, in dramatic works.

5 The technical term *Tamil* is of three kinds, *iyal*, *icai* and *naṭakam*. See V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri, *History of the Tamil Language*, 1930, and Pandit V. Swaminatha Aiyar's *Śaṅkattamiḷum*

Piṟkalattamiḷum, 1929, pp. 45-52. *Iyal* refers to literary Tamil; *icai* is that division of Tamil literature which consists of verses set to music as distinct from poetry or drama. *Naṭakam* is dramatic literature. These three divisions constitute the *muttamiḷ*.

He who played upon the *mirutaṅkam*, knew all forms of dancing and singing, the

musical notes, the pure Tamil modes of speech, the melody and the *tālam*, the harmony born of differentiated time-beats, as well as the flaws that might result from such manipulations, together with the use of different kinds of expressions (*dēsikam*). In playing upon his instruments, he knew how to combine correctly single beats, how to give time for double beats so as to be heard well, how to make both these kinds of beats melodiously merge with the notes of the lute and the flute, and also with the evenly drawn-out note of the vocal chords. With dexterity he could, wherever necessary, subdue the sound of his instrument, so that the other instruments might be properly heard; at times, he would also fitly drown them with the overpowering sound of his *mirutaṇ-kam*. (Such was the high degree of perfection which this master had reached).

The flutist was a master of the traditional rules of that

art. He knew the two combinations known as *cittira*¹ and *vaṇjaṇai*,² whereby harsh syllables were softened and rendered sweet to the ear. He knew the four *varttaṇas* (involving fingering skill), and with his knowledge of the science of the *pālai* music (*kural* and *iḷi*)³, he adjusted himself to the sound produced by the *muḷavu*. He could play carefully enough to be in tune with the *mirutaṅkam* and the *iḷi* strains of the flute. He could observe the notes voiced by the singer and elaborate upon what he heard and at the same time keep himself within the limits of the tune.

1. The term *cittira-p-puṇarppu* is nasalizing the hard consonants in singing a musical piece (*Tamil Lexicon*, p. 141).

2 The term *vañjaṇai-p-puṇarppu* is nasalizing the soft con- sonants in singing.

3

Also *Paṭṭaṭai* as in *vannap-paṭṭaṭai* of the line 63,

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He exhibited his grasp of melodies¹ by playing note by note so that each separate sound might faultlessly be heard.

Then there was the master of the lute of the fourteen strings. In order to produce the seven *pālai* notes he would conjointly sound the respective strings in the lute, known as the *tāram*, and the *kural*, and bringing them to the central part of the lute he would tune

the *kaikkiḷai*
part of the instrument. Similarly, touching
the other
stout string on the *tāram* side and the other
two slender
strings on the *kural* side and bringing them to
the central
part of the lute, he would tune the *viḷari*
part of the
instrument.

Then proceeding from *uḷai*, the most
slender string, up
to the *kaikkiḷai*, he would play upon all the
fourteen strings
and thus produce the *cempālai* note. In a
definite order
the notes would arise, e.g. *paṇunalaippālai*
from *kaikkiḷai*,
sevvaḷippālai from *tuttam*, *kōṭippālai* from
tāram, *viḷarip-*
pālai from *viḷari*, *mērcempālai* from
iḷi—thus are the

combinations effected. In the lute, the notes become lower and lower as they pass over to the left (side of the instrument). It is just the opposite in the flute. The expert in the lute can mix the low and high and the mid-dling notes with a pleasing effect.

The site for erecting the stage was also chosen in accordance with well-established traditions,² having regard to the nature of the soil. For purposes of the measure-

1 The technical terms are *vārappāṭal* and *kūṭaippāṭal*.

2 The reference to *nūl* in ll. 95-6 shows the authority of the

śilpaśāstra which was then in vogue. According to *Arumpata-*

vurai the reference is to dramatic works. This is not very con-

vincing. The choice of the site and the fixing of the stage must

follow the prescriptions of the *śilpaśāstra* only.

ment of the stage,¹ the *kōl*, which was a piece of bamboo growing in the sacred high hills, with the length of a span between every two of its joints, and with twenty-four thumb breadths, was the standard. The stage was eight *kōls* in length, seven *kōls* in breadth, and one *kōl* in height. It had two appropriate doors. The plank platform placed over it was four *kōls* in width. Over the stage were placed painted pictures (of the *bhūtam*)² for praise and worship. The graceful lamp illumining the stage was so placed that the pillars did not cast shadows.³ The single screen and the screen⁴ between the two pillars to the right of the stage, besides the overhanging curtain, were well manipulated by ropes. (Added to these) was the canopy painted⁵ with many beautiful pictures, from which were hanging loosely, garlands of pearl and others. Such was the novel and attractive appearance which the stage presented.

1. For a description of the stage see *Suddhānandappirakāṣa* quoted by Pandit Swaminatha Aiyar, *Sila.*, pp. 114-5, n. The two doors were intended one for entrance and the other for exit.

2. This statement shows that
the institution of *varṇāśrama*

had already come to stay in the Tamil land. The names of the deities or *būtas* worshipped are Vacciraṭṭēkaṇ, Vacciraṭantaṇ, Varuṇaṇ and Iraṭṭakēcvaraṇ (*Cila.*, p. 115, n. Cf. *Civakacintamani*, st. 672). Further details as to the clothing, food, etc., of these four *būtas* are seen in 'Alarpaṭukātai', ll. 2. ff. and ll. 110 ff.

3 This shows a highly advanced state of engineering skill.

4 In the *Civakacintamani* these three kinds of screens (*elini*) are mentioned (st. 675, comm.). See also *Maṇi*, canto v, l. 3.

Elini is evidently the same as *yavanika*.

5

Portrait painting was not unknown in the early centuries of the Christian era. Cf. *Maṇi*, canto xviii, l. 46.

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The *talaikkōl*, or the staff,¹ was the central shaft of a splendid white umbrella captured in the battle-field from monarchs of great repute. It was covered over by purest *jāmbūnada* gold,² its joints bedecked with

nine gems. This staff represented Jayanta, Indra's son, and as such was worshipped in the palace of the protecting king of the white umbrella (the Cōla),

On the day³ on which this staff was to be used by the dancing-girl, she had to bathe it with holy waters, brought in a golden pitcher, and afterwards to garland it. Then it was handed over with a blessing to the State elephant already adorned with a plate of gold and other ornaments on its forehead. To the accompaniment of the drum proclaiming victory, and other musical instruments, the king and his five groups of advisers⁴ were to circumambulate the chariot and the elephant and give the *talaikkōl* to the musician-poet on the top of the chariot. Then they went round the town in a procession, and entering the theatre they placed the *talaikkōl* in its appointed position.

1

11. 1:4-5 are repeated in a slightly altered form in canto xxviii, ll. 98-9 of this work.

2 Four varieties of gold are distinguished, of which the *jambūnada* is the purest variety.

3 Aṭiyārkunallār, acting on the authority of Mativāṇanār, speaks of the following as the auspicious days: *Pūraṇam*, *Kartikai*, *Pūṣam*, *Baraṇi*, *Rēvati*, *Tiruvatirai*, *Aviṭṭam*, *Clitirai*, *Viṣakam*, and *Makam*. The *raśis* appropriate to these are *Riṣabha*, *Simha*, *Tulam*, *Kaṭakam*, *Vṛccikam*, and *Mithuam*. It must be noted that there is no warrant in the text for such astronomical data.

4 The term *aimperumkuḷu* has been interpreted in different ways. See S. K. Aiyangar, *Hindu Administrative Institutions in South India*, 1931, p. 18; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Pāṇṭyan Kingdom*, pp. 32-3; also Dikshitar, *Hindu Administrative Institutions*, pp. 161-2; *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, p. 204.

After this the instrument-players occupied their allotted seats.¹ The dancing-girl (*Māṭavi*) placed her right foot² forward, and stepping in, stayed by the side of the pillar on the right, according to the ancient custom. Likewise her older assistants who followed the old custom gathered themselves by the side of the pillar on the left. The two kinds of prayer (*vāram*) were sung in turn so that virtue might increase and vice might disappear. At the close of the prayer all the musical instruments held by the respective players were sounded.³ The lute was in tune with the flute, and the *mirutaṅkam* with the lute. The resounding note was in tune with the *mirutaṅkam*, and the *āmantirikai* with the sound of the pot.⁴ Each was in perfect harmony with the other. Two beats made one *maṇḍilam*, and eleven such *maṇḍilams* were executed in conformity with the established theatrical practice. When this musical act, called *antarakkoṭṭu*, was over, the auspicious *pālaippan* was sung without the slightest violence to its rigid measure.

The four parts⁵ of the auspicious song were suitably introduced. Beginning with three *maṇḍilams* (or *ottus*) it

1 The allotment of the places was according to the prescription of the *Sāstra* which Aṭiyārkunallar styles as *nūl*, from which he quotes the mode of arrangement on the stage. (See p. 118).

2 Placing the right foot in the first entrance
any new place

or building is considered to be auspicious even
today in India.

3 For a similar expression see *Maṇi.*, canto
vii, l. 45.

4 For a similar order for playing on
musical instruments

see *Civakacintāmaṇi*, st. 124 and 675, comm. See
also *Ṛaiyaṇār*.

Akapporul, sūtra 40, comm.

5 The names of these four are
ukkiram, *turuvaṭi*, *ābhogam*, and *pirakalai*.

Cila., p. 75.

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ended with one *ottu* (*ēkataḷam*); with this
captivating *maṇṇilam* the *dēsi* dance came to an
end.

Māṭavi also danced the *vaṇṇuku*

dance.¹ Then it appeared as if the five-beat-mode of each of the two styles of dancing, *dēsi* and *vaṇuku*, was concentrated in one style —so captivating was her dance. In her quick movement she looked like a golden creeper animated with life. Because her dance was perfect and scientifically correct,² the king who protected the world, in due recognition, presented her with a green leaf-garland and one thousand and eight *kaṇāncus*³ of gold, which was the customary present given to dancers who held the *talaikkōl* and exhibited their talents for the first time.

Fawn-eyed Mātavi⁴
handed over a garland to a hunch-backed woman,
and asked her to stand out in the street 1

In
the *vaṇuku* style of dancing she began with *maṭṭattālam*,
and ended with *ēkatālam* (single time-beat). *Cila*,
p. 76.

2 *Nāṭṭiya-Naṭṭūl* is apparently a treatise dealing with *tāṇṭavam*, *nirutyam*, and *nāṭyam*, something like the *Bharatanāṭyaśāstra* in Sanskrit, now being published in the Baroda Sanskrit Series.

3 *Kalañcu-poṇ* was an ancient coin of Tamil land. The term *Kalañcu* often occurs in Tamil inscriptions, and means sometimes a coin and sometimes gold bullion of the proper standard of weight and fineness. (See *An. Rep. Ep.*, 1912, p. 65 and op. cit., 1916, p. 116). 'In an early Pāṇṭya inscription (No. 90 of 1908) it occurs as the equivalent of the Sanskrit *Kṛiṣṇakācha*, and Mr. H. W. Codrington of the Ceylon Civil Service informs me that in that island a coin of the *kalañcu* weight was called *kāhapāṇa*. No. 197 of appendix B gives *kalañcu* as the equivalent of *niṣka*.'

Thus writes the epigraphist, op. cit., p. 106.

4 From the expression *namkōṣi* in l. 166 it would be more appropriate if the words in ll. 164-6 were spoken by Mātavi's mother; but the commentators attribute them to Mātavi herself.

C—9

where the rich citizens of the city passed to

and fro, as if she was offering it¹ for sale, and to announce that 'this garland is worth a sum of 1008 *kalāṅcus* of very excellent gold. He who buys this garland becomes the husband of our creeper-like lady'. The garland representing the large lotus-eyed Mātavi was purchased by Kōvalan, and, accompanied by the hunchback, he entered Mātavi's bridal chamber, and as he embraced her he was captivated so much by her charms that he forgot himself and did not like to part from her. In sooth, he forgot his own unsullied home and wife.

VENPĀ

With golden bangles, Mātavi of Pūmpukar exhibited her skill on the dancing stage by word of mouth, in respect of numbers and letters, five *iyals* four *paṇs*, and eleven kinds of *kūttus*.

making her reputation spread on the earth.

1 The garland was not worth 1008 *kaṇṇus*. But it was the symbol for Mātavi who was worth 1008 *kaṇṇus* and it was announced that whosoever wanted to take her as his partner should be prepared to pay so much gold.

CANTO IV

ANTIMALAIC CIRAPPUCCEYKATAI OR

IN PRAISE OF THE EVENING

AT the time when Mother Earth, enrobed
by the waters of the deep, felt afflicted
exclaiming, 'I do not see the mighty lord (the

Sun) who sent out his rays all over the world and ruled it with his unequalled single disk! Nor is it known where is the (prince) Moon who illumines the wide sky with his cool rays.' And when her four faces (the four directions) turned pale, her flower-eyes moist, and her whole form covered with dew like the chieftain, who occupies, with the aid of rebellious subjects, the kingdom of powerful kings during their absence, to the grief of loyal tax-paying subjects, Evening (the alien chief) made his triumphant entry into fertile old Pukar, to the grief of faithful wives left alone by their husbands, and to the delight of disloyal women enjoying the company of their secret lovers. It was then that the Kōvalar¹ sent forth from their flutes the *mullai* songs, the buzzing bee sucked the honey from the *mullai* flowers, the soft-footed southern breeze warded off the six-footed bee (*kurumpu*)² which had forced his way into unopened buds'

The term Kōvalar means Gōpālar or cowherds.

They are a community belonging to the region of the *mullai*. The whole Tamil land was classified into five regions, namely *marutam* (river-bed), *kuṛiñci* (hill), *neytal* (littoral tracts), *pālai* (deserts), and *mullai* (forests).

2 The six-footed bee is referred to by the term *kuṛumpu* as it acts like the Kuṛumpar, a term which stands for petty chief. 118

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(Nor was Kaṇṇaki alone in her sorry plight). Owing to their separation from their dear lords, other ladies who breathed heavily as bellows, abandoned the bedchamber¹ which they used during the hot season for that with narrow windows, which they used during the cold weather. They were sad that their breasts

could not be decked with sandal-paste or with strings of pearls. They did not go near the bed of cool flowers plucked from flower-pots and watery fields. They could no longer repose on beds which were made of the soft down shed by the swan when it was pairing with its loving mate. These unhappy women, who once, unperturbed, in *ūṭal*² (lovers' quarrel) with their loving husbands rolled their eyes between the bridges of their noses and the tips of their ears, were now in despair. Their long eyes, red with weeping, dropped pearl-like tears because of their loneliness.

(At such a time) with the swan's soft tread for her gentle gait, with the sweet-smelling and honey-hiding *āmpal* flower for her fragrance, with the blooming lotus for her rosy lips, with the black sand for her wavy hair, the ladylike³ lake with the *nōṭiṛam* melody of bard-bees opened her eyes, which were the fair *kuvaḷai* flowers, when the birds and fowls sent out from time to time

their shrill and loud notes,
as if they beat the drum and

1 Mention of five beds in the *Civakacintāmaṇi*,
st. 838.

2 *Uṭal* is a term of much significance in Tamil
love literature.
ture. (See the *Tirukkural*, ch. 133. Cf. *pulavi*.)

3 The lake is compared to a lady. The blossoming *kuvaḷai*
flowers in the lake are the lady's eyes which, as their petals open
in the morning, represent the lady's awakening. The ancient
custom was for members of a noble family to be roused by the
singing of auspicious songs. In the allegory this is represented
by the bees' humming round the lotuses.

ANTIMALAIC CIRAPPUCCEYKATAI

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blew the conch, till the dawn expelled the
darkness of the night from the city which
resembled the expansive sea.

One would say that in these watches of the dark night (*pakal*)¹ the fish-bannered prince (Cupid), going from place to place armed with his sugar-cane bow and flower-arrow, stood excellent guard over the city.

1 Note the peculiar use of the term *pakal* meaning midnight.

Cf. *Maturaikkāñci*, l. 653; *Puṇam.*, st. 189, l. 3.

musical science¹ and could exhibit their faultless skill on flute and lute by sounding the seven notes; and finally the lower class of artists who excelled in several minor arts, had

their respective localities. All these places in the city went by the name of *maruvūrppākkam*.

In another part of the city there were the king's street,²

the car street with flying flags, the bazaar street, the broad

highway where highborn merchants lived on either side in

the turreted houses, the Brahmana street,³ the streets of

physicians and astrologers⁴ respectively, and of agricultural

communities, and the broad street having the residences

of those who dexterously bored holes in gems and pearls

and mounted them, and of those who polished the shells

and the conches that were worn as ornaments. There⁵

were also separate quarters where dwelt *sūtas* and

māgadhas,⁵ religious dancers astronomers,⁶
mock-dancers,
prostitutes, actresses,⁷ maidens bearing flowers
and betels,
maid-servants,⁸ bagpipe musicians, drummers,
of different
sorts, buffoons and jesters.

1 This may be interpreted also 'who had
inherited their
skill from their forefathers'.

2 See *Mañi.*, canto iv, ll. 37-8. The *Rajamārga* of Sanskrit
literature.

3 It is interesting to see that the term *maraiyōr* is interpreted
by the commentators as *pañcagrāmins*. In the light of the terms
bhūtagrāma and *indriyagrāma* in Sanskrit literature, this term may
refer to Brahmans who perform austerities by self-control.

4 See *Mañi.*, canto ii, l. 29.

5

Cf. *Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra*, Bk. X, ch. iii.

6 *Mañi.*, canto vii, l. 65.

7 *ibid.*, canto xx, l. 30.

8 *ibid.*, canto xxiv, l. 19.

In an extensive open space, on the outskirts of the

city, were quarters occupied by cavalrymen with swift

horses, elephant warriors, charioteers with lofty chariots

and infantrymen with fearsome looks.

This region was

further celebrated by the presence of highly renowned

great men. It went by the name of *paṭṭiṇappākkam*.

The central part of the city between the two divisions

(*maruvūrppākkam* and *paṭṭiṇappākkam*) was open and

looked like the battlefield where the armies of two great

monarchs could meet. Underneath the dense rows of trees were erected permanent booths and stalls. That was the market-place (*nāṭaṅkāṭi*)¹ where the din and bustle of sellers and buyers could be heard throughout the day.

On the day on which the moon approached the *cittirai* star in the month *cittirai* (i.e. on the full-moon day) the sacrifice of boiled grains, sweetened sesame balls, meat mixed with rice, flowers, incense, and toddy was offered by the elderly (*marava*)² maidens; in fascinating dress, and as if devoid of shame at the altar in front of the guardian deity³ who had arrived in obedience to the orders of the

Lord of the Dēvas, to ward off the evil which might be-

fall the victorious king (Mucukunda),³ they then enjoyed

1 The nālāṅkāṭī is literally a day-market. It was situated

in the central portion of the city, between the maṇuvūrppākkam

and the paṭṭinappākkam, the two broad divisions of the city.

2 For the work of the Būta, etc., see canto vi, ll. 7 ff

following, and the commentary thereon.

3 For a different version of the story see the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. Mucukunda is one of the three sons of Māndhātā and Bindumati. His brothers are Purukutsa and Ambariṣa (Bhāga. Pur., Bk. IX, ch. 6, st. 38). Hearing that Kālayavana, or simply Yayana, was carrying destruction to the Dēvas, Mucukunda

themselves in the *tunāṅkai*¹ and *kuravai* as if possessed with divinity and left the place with the loud prayer 'May the king of the land and all this vast kingdom not be troubled by hunger, disease or enmity but enjoy seasonal rains and prosperity'.

The valiant warriors residing in the suburbs (*maruvūppākkam*) and the leaders of the army quartered in the city (*paṭṭinappākkam*), vied with one another in going first to the great altar to make the asseveration 'May all evil to our mighty king be warded off, and may you (the Būtam) stand firm on the side of those who propitiate you with offerings! Stone-slingers, and different classes of soldiers who held shields stained with blood and human flesh, as well as lances, patted themselves on their shoulders, shouting exultingly, and cut off their dark-haired heads containing such fierce red eyes as seemed to burn those upon whom they looked, and willingly offered them upon the sacrificial altar (of the guardian deity) with the prayer that the conquering king might be ever victorious, when those headless trunks seemed to speak through the drums of untanned leather these words of thunder: 'We have given you our lives as a sacrifice: Accept them.'²

entered the cave, the residence of Yavana, and slew him, to the wonder of the Dēvas. Indra offered him a place of honour in heaven. But Mucukunda wanted to go on sleeping in that cave undisturbed for an unlimited period. Kṛishṇa met him and blessed him as a yogin, (ibid., Bk. X, ch. 51). He undertook penance in the Badari *āsrama*.

1 The term *tunaṅkal*, otherwise known as

ṣiṅki (see *Divā-*

karam, st. 9) is the dance in which the dancers rested their hands on their hips. In the *kuravai* they grasped each other's hands in a circle.

2 The reference is to *talai-pali*, a very ancient custom prevalent in South India, bearing strong evidence to the early forms

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Once Tirumāvajavan¹ felt that there was no foe on either side² fit to fight with him and thinking, in his thirst for war, that there might be foes in the north, he had an auspicious day³ chosen for taking out his sword, umbrella⁴ and war-drum,⁵ and he prayed to his guardian deity that he might be lucky enough to find an enemy fit to encounter his broad shoulders, and advanced in that direction. Finding the great Himalayas, the residence of gods, as the barrier arresting his further progress, he retreated with pride after engraving his tiger-emblem on its rocky side.

On his return, the king of the great Vacciranaṭu⁶ whose sway extended as far as the roaring sea (in the east), gave

of Śakti worship. This is corroborated by the Pallava architecture. (See the interesting article, 'The Head offering to the Goddess in Pallava Architecture', of Dr. J. Ph. Vogel in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London, Vol. VI, Pt. II, 1931.) See also the Kalaimagaḷ, Vol. I, pp. 416 ff., where Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri translates the above contribution, and ibid., pp. 802 ff., where again Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar re-examines it in the light of literature.

1 Tirumāvajavan is the name of Karikal-Peruvaḷattān, who was actuated by imperialism and lust of conquest.

2 Perhaps the Cēra and the Pāṇṭya kings.
Cf. the closing

lines of canto i, and the footnote.

3 Cf. Vāṇāt-kōṭal, (Pu. Por., veṇbā
'Vāñji', st. 4).

4 Cf. Kuṭaināt-kōṭal, ibid., st. 3.

5 Muracunāt-kōṭal, Puram., st. 50 n.

6 Vajranātu on the banks of the river Sōṇai (Son). Its king held the status of an udāsina or neutral of the Arthasāstra literature. We are not able to locate this country definitely. Perhaps it is the region where the tribe Vajjis of the Jātakas lived. This was on the northern shores of the Ganges opposite to Magadha (Tam., Magada). See S. B. L. Cowell, Jātakas, Vol. VI, p. 120.

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him a pearl canopy as tribute while the king
of Magadha¹

famous for his sword-play, and his enemy
a while ago,

presented to him an audience-hall²
(paṭṭimaṇṭapam). The

king of Avanti gave him a friendly present
of a tall and

beautiful arch on the gateway. Though
all these were

made to gold and gems, their technique was not known to

human artists even of exceptional skill ; they were long

ago given to the ancestors of these three monarchs by the

divine Maya in return for some valuable service rendered

to him. When they were all placed together, they formed

an artistic *maṇṭapam* much praised by great men.

(In addition to this) there was the open space (*vellitai-*

maṇṭam) where could be found many bundles of goods

with marks indicative of the quantity,² weight and names

of their new owners. Since there was neither gate nor

lock nor watchman guarding them, thieves might some-

times be tempted to remove these bundles on

their heads.

And if they did so, the invisible deity
guarding the place
would make the thief go round and round
the open plain,
with the heavy burden on his head but
would not permit
him to pass away from there. The very
thought of steal-
ing anything made people quake with fear.⁴

1 The king of Magadha was the ar
or enemy.

2 For paṭṭimaṇṭapam, see Maṇḍ., canto 1,
ll. 60-1. The
hall where learned men assembled and held
discourse. (See
Tiruvācakam, paṭṭimaṇṭapam ērrinaḥ ērrinaḥ,
'śatakam' 49.)

Nacelnārkkinīyar holds the view that it was more
an assembly of
Sanskrit pandits. See Tol., Porul., sūtra 490
comm.

3 The use of pictographic writing reminds us of South India's intercourse with Egypt on the one hand Valley on the other. and the Indus

4 One of the references to superstitious
See also ll. 133-7,
belief of the times.

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Next, there was the place (*ilancimanram*) with the miraculous lake by bathing in and circumambulating which all hunchbacks and cripples, the dumb, the deaf and lepers were cured of their infirmities and gained health and grace of form.

Then there was the open space where

stood the tall

shining stone (*neṭumkalniṇṇamaṇṇam*), by the worship of
and going round which were cured all those who had
grown mad by being deceived (into consuming drugs),
those who were suffering from palsy as a result of poison,
those bitten by sharp-toothed venomous serpents and those
who were possessed by devils with protruding
eyes.

There was again the meeting-place of
four roads

(*būtacatukkam*) where stood the Būta,
proclaiming in a

voice loud enough to be heard as far as
four *kāvatams*¹

that he would bind with his rope and devour
by thrashing

the wicked who assumed the garb of
asceticism to cover

their sins,² cunning wives who practised
vice in secret,

intriguing ministers, men who coveted other
men's wives,

and witnesses who gave false evidence, and

tale-bearers.

Further there was the place
(*pāvaimaṇṇam*) where

stood the statue which would never open
its mouth but

would weep by shedding tears on every
occasion when

there was a deviation from the path of justice
by the king,

or when partiality was shown in his court
of justice by

wrong interpretation of the law.

1 The municipal limits of the city of Pukār
seem to have

been ten miles in circumference. The
topographical description

of ancient Pukār approximates to the modern city of Madras. A
kavatam or katam refers to a distance of two and a half miles.

2 Six kinds of heinous offences are mentioned here. It may
be noted in passing that the Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra prescribes
heavy punishments in the case of pseudo-sannyāsins, false
witnesses, adulterers, etc.

Sacrifice was offered in all the five aforementioned places¹ held in veneration by men of wisdom who knew the real truth about them.

Then the auspicious drum was removed from the temple called Vaccirakkōṭṭam,² placed on the nape of the elephant adorned with the girdle, and conveyed to the temple where the young white elephant stood.³ This was indicative of the beginning and the end of Indra's festival. After this the auspicious tall flag (bearing the ensign of the white elephant) which stood in the temple of the Kalpaka (*tarunilaikkōṭṭam*) tree was hoisted aloft in the sky.

On the verandas of the big mansions⁴ were to be seen

artistic planks set with emeralds and diamonds whereon

stood coral pillars. At the entrance of these mansions

were suspended ornamental hangings having the shape of

the *makara* fish from whose teeth (horns), carved with

symbols representing auspicious things and adorned with

kimpuri, hung strings of pearls in series. The streets

were further beautified by golden pitchers filled with water,

glittering *pālikai* vessels, lamps wrought in the shape of

1 As many as five manrams are mentioned here.

2 See Mañi., canto i, ll. 27-8. (Sans., Vajrakōṣṭa.)

3 The temple of the Airāvata, Indra's elephant.

4 For a similar celebration of Indra's festival see Vīramitrodaya, pp. 425-33; Mhb., 'Ādi.', ch. 64. For the origin of the Indra cult in Rig Vedic India, see A. C. Das, Rig Vedic Culture, 1925, pp. 56 ff. It would appear from the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (Pt. V, ch. 10), that the ancient cowherd communities celebrated Indra's festival, and this was discontinued from the time of Kṛiṣṇa who wanted the Gōpas to take to the worship of cattle and mountains which alone afforded them food and occupation. A festival of Indra is referred to as being celebrated by King Salavahana and his subjects in the Kālakācārya Katha (see W. Norman Brown's

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maidens,¹ golden flags, pure white feather fans, fragrant pastes and many other ornamentations.

There were assembled in these streets the five great groups of the king's councillors (*aimperumkuḷu*)² and the eight great bodies of the king's retinue (*eṇpērāyam*),³ princes of the blood royal, sons of the merchant aristocracy, fast riders on horseback, groups of elephant riders, and charioteers whose chariots were drawn by horses, for the glorification of their highly reputed ruler's sway over this wide world. One thousand and eight kings bore on their heads gold pots filled with cool and holy water rendered fragrant by floating pollen of flowers of the Kāveri, taken from where it

joins the sea, and performed the bathing ceremony of the Lord of Gods, to the delight of the earth and the admiration of heaven.

Joy prevailed everywhere on account of Indra's festival in the temple of the great Lord who was never born (Śiva), in the temple of the six-faced red Lord (Subrahmanya), in the temple of Vāliyōn (Baladēva)⁴ whose complexion was like the white conch-shell, in the temple of Neṭiyōn (Viṣṇu) of the dark colour, and in the temple of Indra of the victorious umbrella and the pearl garland.

1 Cf. Maṇi., canto i, l. 45.

2 For aimperumkuḷu see Maṇi., canto i, l. 17; Tolk, 'Kiḷavi',
sūtra 57; Naccinārkkinīyar's commentary;
minister, purohita,
commander, ambassador, and spy.

3 For a twofold interpretation of the term enpērāyam, see

Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature and History,

4 The temple of Baladēva is mentioned,
besides that of

Indra. In later days these two cults have become
extinct. See

R. G. Bhandarkar's *Vaishnavism, Saivism*, pp. 3,
9, 11; also

M. Raghava Aiyangar, *Āḷvarkālanilai*, p. 7.
See also p. 50 *supra*.

C—11

On one side the Vedic sacrifices,¹ as ordained by Brahmā, were faultlessly performed, and on another the festivals pertaining to the four classes of Dēvas² and the eighteen Gaṇas³ and different other gods, were separately and correctly conducted. Inside the city were the Jaina temples and other Dharma institutions;⁴ outside were Śrīkoīl⁵ and other sacred establishments. The Purāṇa reciters⁶ also discharged their duties in another place. Elsewhere, the king's victorious chariot, with its banners flying, was taken out gracefully to annihilate the enemy-kings and others. In another place rose high immeasurable melodies produced by the flute, the drum, expert players on the yāl and the human voice of the Paṇar.⁷ Thus in that vast city, every lane and

1 This shows the popularity of the Vedic sacrifices.

2 The four classes are Vasus, Divākaras, Rudras and Maruts; all of them are Vedic deities. In reality tradition speaks of thirty-three classes of Gods—the eight Vasus, twelve Ādityas (Divākara), eleven Rudras, and the two Maruts.

3 One classification of the eighteen groups runs as follows: apsaras (?) nāgas, siddhās, gandharvas, vidyādhara, piśācas, tarakas bōga-būmiyar, kimpuruṣas, śēnas, asuras, butas, munis, dēvas, garuḍas, rākṣasas, yakṣas and cāranars.

4 This may refer to the Jaina or the Buddhist institutions or even to those of the orthodox religion. But the term paṭṭi shows that there

was a school of dissenting sects, especially the Jaina.

5 This is not necessarily a reference to the temple of Lakṣhmī.

6 The reading of the Purāṇas in the public places so as to

be heard by all classes was a feature of ancient days. Cf.

Harsacarita where the Vāyu Purāṇa is said to have been read in

public for the benefit of the masses.

7 The Pāṇar were a class of minstrels and

masters of music. INTIRAVILAVURETUTTA KATAI

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by-lane were alive with the sound of the drum by night and day.

Because she had not been separated
from her lover,

Mātavi, wearing beautifully serrated
ear-rings, had not

lost her charms.

Mingled with the united fragrance of the

mātavi flower,¹ the home-grown *mullai*,
jasmine, the

mayilai flower, the pot-grown blue-lotus, and the red
kaṭunir,² and pleased with love's delight, seeking sport in
the pleasure garden made fragrant by the lovable flower-
buds, entering into the fresh aroma of flowers in the ever-
mirthful market-place³

ever-wet sandal-paste,

caressing the frankincense and the
and continuously indulging in the

joyous lovers' speech and laughter,
roamed about the city accompanied by

the mountain breeze
the *iḷi*-sounding bee

and by the mild rays of early summer, in the same way

that Kōvalaṇ went about accompanied by minstrels singing

the *kural* tune and by his city-companions skilled in love

affairs.

One such companion spoke of his sweetheart: 'Has

the moon who roams in the beautiful sky become afraid of

its enemy, the serpent Rāhu,⁴ and left the sky to appear here in your disguise by carrying a heavy cloud on its head, parting with the little hare, and painting on its face the figures of two fishes (in the place of the two eyes) with the *kumiḷa* flower (the nose) between them?"

1 This can also be interpreted thus:
did not become the bud that people love,

'The red *mātavi* flower
but grew into a beauti-

fully bent root without losing its redness'.

2 A categorical list of fragrant flowers

which would in-

crease sensuous desire.

3

Here a full description of the *nāṭaṅkāṭi* is furnished.

4 Rahu devouring the moon, says the legend, causes lunar eclipses, and devouring the sun, solar eclipses,

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A second said: 'Does the flash of lightning nurtured with great care by Cupid of the fish-flag (whose body was burnt by the spark of Siva's third eye),¹ intend to come down here and regain it by drinking the cool nectar drops of the moon?'

A third said: 'Has the honeyed lotus, in the course of searching for its companion (*Lakṣmī*), transformed itself into two dark *kuvaḷai* flowers, one on each side of the *kumīḷa* blossom? Or has it blossomed again into the red *ilavam* and into jasmine to

proclaim that it is in this flourishing city that the goddess Lakṣhmī² has entered so that the monarch of the wide world may greatly prosper?"

Yet another said: 'Is the god of the devouring mouth (Yama), who destroys all and who, in fear of the righteous king, gave up the duty imposed on him and changed his male form for that of a girl, with a smiling countenance and covered with bashfulness, speaking words as soft as the notes of the pleasing *yāl*?'

With such frivolous talk the broad-shouldered lovers gained victory over their sweethearts, chaste as Arun-dati, who looked like a great army of the bodiless god (Cupid), and prevented them from running away from their presence by closely clasping them in voluptuous embrace and (thereby) smearing their chests all over with the sandal solution which adorned the breasts of these women. By thus giving them the pleasure of

their union,

1 The reference is to Śiva burning the God of Love.
For a full description of the legend,
and 245.

see Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 154, 194

2 The term used in the text is *ulvarikkōlam*. A classic example is that of the Pāṇḍavas in disguise in Virāṭanagara. See below, canto viii, l. 89, Aṭiyārkkuṇallar's comm.

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they made their wives' lotus eyes lose the colour of the *kuvaḷai* and gain instead a reddish tinge (indicative of sleeplessness). The people of the city in a state of helplessness and tremor, spoke to themselves, 'If our great feast can do nothing to remove the redness from the eyes of our women-folk, is there any medicine at all that can cure this in the wide earth?'

It was then the middle day of the festival in

honour of the King of Gods (Indra).¹ The dark left eye of Kaṇṇaki and the red right eye of Mātavi throbbed and were filled with tears of sorrow and of joy respectively like the *kaḷunir* flower which shakes when the sweet pollen inside it emits honey and loses its external colour.

1 In the prehistoric days of Tamil India it appears that a certain Coḷa monarch, by name Tuṅkaiyilēnta-toṭittō-cempiyaṇ, introduced Indra's festival to be celebrated annually in his capital city Pūmpukār. The duration of the festival was twenty-eight days. The festival continued to be celebrated by succeeding monarchs, as it came to be thought that by not celebrating it, the Catukkabūtam, engaged on the orders of Indra to check sin and sinners, would leave the city thus leading it to desolation and ruin. (See Maṇi., canto i, 'Vijāvaraikāta!'.) Years rolled by and Neṭumuṭikkiṭṭi became the monarch. Once when he was spending some time in the royal park, a certain beautiful girl presented herself before him, and at his desire, lived with him as his wife. One day she suddenly disappeared, and when the King was aimlessly inquiring of passers-by, a certain Cāraṇa informed him that she was Pilivaḷai, daughter of

Vaṣalvāṇan, King of the Nākanāḍu, and that she would return no more, but would send her son. The ship in which the son was sent foundered, and moved by great grief the King failed to celebrate Indra's festival for the year. On this Maṇimākalai the deity cursed that the city be swallowed by the sea. It so happened, and Aravana-Aṭikaḷ with his disciples left for Vañci (Ibid, cantos xxiv-vi).

CANTO VI KATALATU KATAI

OR SEA BATHING

ONCE a Vidyādara hero celebrated, along with his lady-love of the long fish-like eyes, a feast in honour of the god of love in the extensive, fragrant and flowery grove in a Cēḍi¹ on the slopes of the silver-peaked Kailāsa.² He then realized that that was the day³ when Indra's festival would commence in the flourishing city of Pukār wife,

(Campāpati) in South India, and he
‘We shall go and witness the place

said to his

where the

great Būtam eats the sacrifice offered to
it (in com-

memoration of its) having carried out
Indra’s orders

to ward off the evil effects of the arrows
aimed by

hosts of swift-going Asuras against the
terror-stricken

but best of men, the victorious
king Mucukunda,⁴

while he was keeping watch, tiger-like
over Indra’s

city.⁵

1 The Cēḍī is the city of the Vidyādaras
according to Jaina

literature. Cf. Cīvakacintāmaṇi, p.
170, st. 546-(2).

2 The Kailāsa Hills were the
abode of the celestial Gaṇa,
by name the Vidyādaras, among others.
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Cf. Matsya Purāṇa, ch.

3 The commentator says the same day next
month.

4 Tiruntuvelaṇṇal occurring in the text is a
reference to

Mucukunda, once the King of the Coḷas.

5 This city is known as

Amarāvati in Sanskrit literature,

KATALATU KATAI

assembly-halls¹ of unrivalled architectural beauty, given by Indra in gratitude and refitted on the earth by the monarch's ancestor who once kept guard over Amarāvati.²

‘(Agastya) finding that Nārada³ did not play on the vīṇa properly, or appropriately, to the song of the dancing Urvaśī before the thousand-eyed Indra⁴, or to the song of her accompanist (*tōriyamañantai*) who sang in the *vāram* which did not enrapture his ear, laid a curse, “Let the lute lose its charm, and let this dancer be born on the earth.” In the line of that Urvaśī was born Mātavi with her hood like *alkul*. (In Pukār) we shall witness her dance.

‘My dear coral-mouthed, slender-waisted girl, we shall there worship Indra, the lord of gods’. So saying, he started showing his lady-love the many-crested Himalayas,⁵ the ever-flowing Ganges, the city of Ujjain,⁶ the Vindhya forests, the Tirupati hills,⁷ and the

1 Five great maṅgrams are mentioned here.

2 There is a Tamil tradition that the ancient Cōla monarch

Mucukunda went to help Indra when Amarāvati was besieged by the Asuras.

3 Nārada, the divine music master, and author of Sīkṣa, a

musical treatise of the orthodox school. Because he did not play

properly on the lute, the sage Agastya cursed his instrument.

4 This is similar to the Sanskrit term śahasrākṣa.

5 The geographical data are furnished. The Kailāsa Hills

are on the Himalayan slopes. The way to Pukār lay through the

Ganges, Ujjain, the Vindhyas, the Tirupati hills, and the Kāvērī tracts.

6 Ujjain is an ancient city much celebrated in Sanskrit literature.

7 Vāṅkatam, or the Tirupati hills, is celebrated in ancient

Tamil literature of the Caṅkam age. The Ālvārs refer to it, and

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Kāveri tracts overburdened with crops, and finally reached Pukār, enveloped by flowery groves. He showed her also the city, after performing the worship of Indra in the prescribed manner, and then witnessed the celebration of the enjoyable festival in that ancient and affluent town.

Said he then (of his fair companion) :
'My dear, thou

wilt hear the *dēvapāni*¹ in honour of Viṣṇu, the four songs

in honour of the four *būtams* worshipped respectively by

the four castes, and the song in honour of the Moon.

roaming in the sky for the benefit of all.
Afterwards

thou wilt see: The *koṭukoṭṭi*,² danced by
Siva, Umā

keeping time on one side, on the burial-ground where
Bārati (Kāḷi), danced with faultless rhythm and avoiding
wrong time-measures, when the big fire-tipped arrow
obeyed His command to burn the three cities (of the
Asuras) at the request of the Dēvas;

‘The *pāñṭaraṅka*³ dance which Siva, in
the form of

Bārati,⁴ displayed before the four-faced
Brahmā standing

in His chariot;

Pēyālvār speaks of it as Tirumalai Iyarpati (63 and
75). See also

Kamba-Rāmāyaṇa. Kiṣkinda, ‘Nadavitta Paṭālam’,
st. 26-8.

1 *Devapāṇi* is not a celestial
song but a song sung in honour

of the God. Dēvapāṇi is of two kinds:
śirudēvapāṇi.

perumdēvapāṇi and

2 *Kotum-kotṭi* is the original word according

to Naccinārk-

kiṇiyar. See Kāli., 'Kaṭavuḷ'. For an actual description of the

dance see canto xxviii, ll. 67-75. The translator has not been able

to find parallels from the Sanskrit and other works corroborating

all the eleven kinds of dancing mentioned here.

3 *Pāṇḍaranka* is again a dance attributed to Siva.

4 *Bārati-arangam*, the place where Bārati Bāravi danced.

(Sarasvatī) or

KATALATUKATAI

1

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'The *alliyam*¹ dance performed by the dark-hued Viṣṇu (*aṅjanavaṇṇan*) after disposing of the treacherous devices of Kamsa;²

'The *mallu* dance performed (by the same deity) after the destruction of the Asura (Bāṇa);³

‘The *tuṭi* dance (of Subrahmaṇya) in the midst of the sea, which itself served as the dancing-hall, following the destruction of the demon Cūra⁴ who hid himself there;

‘The *kuṭai*⁵ (umbrella-dance) danced by (Subrah- maṇya) lowering the umbrella before the Asuras who gave up their arms in great distress ;

1 The *alliya* dance is said to be one among the ten dances engaged in by Kṛiṣṇa.

2 Kamsa, the uncle of Kṛiṣṇa, wanted to kill the latter by means of a number of villainous guiles. One of them was to send an Asura follower of his in the guise of an elephant by name

Kuvalayāpīḍa. Kṛiṣṇa found it out, and killed him. See Bhāga

Pur., Bk. X, ch. 43, st. 2-15. See also Viṣ. Pur., Bk. V, ch. 20.

3 Bāṇa was an Asura with a thousand arms. He was the

son of Bali and Kōṭara. His capital was called Sōṇitapuram. He had a daughter Uṣā. Aniruddha, son of Pradyumna and grandson of Kṛiṣṇa, carried her away. Hence Bāṇa had him imprisoned. Kṛiṣṇa went to his grandson's rescue, and chopped off Bāṇa's thousand hands. See Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 62 and 63. Cf. Cūṭamani.

4. This refers to the legend of the killing of the Asura Cūrapatma by Subrahmaṇya. Even today this festival is celebrated in all Siva temples in connexion with what is known as Skandaśaṣṭi, the sixth day in the dark-half of the month of Kārtikai. For details of the legend see Kandapurāṇam, § Cūrapaṇmaṇvatai. The reference is to the 'war-dance of triumph on the heaving wave-platform of the oceanic stage, to the accompaniment of the rattle

of his drum (tuṭi)'.
5 It is not possible to trace this legend.

To venture a con-

jecture, the reference is to the greatest victory

C—12

of the baby

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'The *kuṭam* (pot-dance)¹ exhibited by Viṣṇu (of the world-measuring stride) after walking through the streets of Bāṇāsura's extensive city ;

'The *pēṭi*² danced by Kāma (Cupid) who changed his male form to that of an hermaphrodite ;

'The *marakkāl* dance of Māyavaḷ (Durgā)³ when She could not stand the wily deeds of the cruel Asuras ;

Subrahmaṇya, six days old, over the great Tarakāsura and his satellites, a match for Viṣṇu, Indra and other Gods. See Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 160. It is said that Subrahmaṇya 'screened his face with a parasol, and played in exultant derision the kuṭaikkūttu or the umbrella-dance'. This is sometimes performed during temple processions when 'the God's umbrella-bearer cuts some capers with his unwieldy parasol; but the kāvaṭikkūttu is a greater favourite in these days in Murukan's worship and festivities.' T. A. S. Vol. II, p. 185. Cf. Nighaṇṭu, 14th ed., p. 179. For the sculptured figures representing the two varieties called the kuṭaikkūttu and the kāvaṭikkūttu, see the two Yaḷi panels flank- ing the entrance of the sanctum of the Adbhuta-Nārāyaṇa temple at Tirukkaḍaittannam (Chenganachery Taluk). T.A.S., Vol. II. p. 187.

1 This variety of dancing also has no counterpart in the Sanskrit Nāṭya treatises. Its origin has to be traced to the purely pastoral pursuits of its votaries, the shepherds, who eventually came to consider it as one of the three favourite dances of the

God Viṣṇu in his special manifestation as Gōpāla, the Divine Shepherd.' The Vaiṣṇava Ālvārs refer to this (see Perīālvār Tirumōḷi, Nācciyār Tirumōḷi, etc.). It is popular even now in the uriyāṭi festival in commemoration of the sports of the baby Kṛishṇa. The reference in the text is to the occasion of the defeat of Bāṇāsura in his capital of Sōṇitapura (Sōṇagaram). Cf. account in the Tiruvaraṅkakkalāmpakam.

the

2

For the pēṭi dance, see Maṇi., canto iii, l. 125.

3 Durgā is otherwise known as Mahisāsūramardani. See also canto xii, ll. 65-6.

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139.

‘The *pāvai* dance¹ of Lakṣmī when the Asuras clad in warlike attire ceased (from battle)

;

‘And the *kaṭayam* dance² of lady Indrāṇi

standing in the field on the northern gate (of Bāṇa's city).

‘Thou wilt see, my dear, the above-named eleven dances and the songs appropriate to them, acted and sung by the respective dancers with suitable garments and gestures, and in erect as well as bending postures, according to the established conventions.

‘This is Mātavi, descended from the line of the great Mātavi mentioned by me when we were in the grove rich with the pollen of sweet flowers.’ Thus said the highly distinguished Vidyādara entranced by the whole prospect.

Kōvalaṇ, who was in the state of *ūṭal* (love-quarrel), was sorry to see the end of that Indra festival, which consisted of dancing in different kinds of attire, accompanied by the chiming of anklets, and which had been witnessed incognito by the denizens of Heaven.

To please him (so that his dejection

might not gall him further), she (Mātavi) bathed her fragrant black hair, soft as flowers, till it shone, in the perfumed oil prepared by mixing up ten kinds of astringents, five spices, and thirty-two herbs soaked in water; she dried it in fuming incense,

and perfumed the different plaits,³ with the thick paste of

1 See Maṇi., canto iii, ll. 116 f.

2 It is rather difficult to identify this incident.

The Tamil name for Indrāṇi is Aylrāni.

3 One of the many references to show that five plaits of hair were generally worn by Tamil ladies, especially when they were young.

the musk-deer. She adorned her little feet, reddened by dye, by wearing choice rings (*pili*)¹ on her fair and slender toes, and on her ankles becoming ornaments known as *pariyakam*, *nūpuram*, *pāṭakam*, *sataṅkai*, and *ariyakam*.² She put ornaments on her rounded thighs. Over her waist was a girdle made of thirty-two strands of big pearls worn over a blue cloth embroidered with the figures of flowers. Round her upper arms she had armlets studded with pearls together with attractive bangles of precious stones (*kāmar-kaṇṭikai*). Round her soft-haired wrists were beautiful bracelets (*cūṭagam*) in which was set the costliest gem in front with diamonds all round, gold bangles, bangles of nine gems (*pariyakam*), conch bangles, and bangles of coral. On to her tiny fingers, red as the *kāntal* flower, so as to hide them, she slipped a ring bent into the shape of an open-mouthed fish, and a highly brilliant and lustrous ring of gems, and a round ring glittering with rubies and brilliant diamonds.³

Her delicate and beautiful neck was adorned with a chain necklace called *nunṭoṭar*, with a fine string of exquisite workmanship and with a garland. Added to these was a string of ornamental gems held by a clasp, which covered the small nape of her neck.⁴

1 *Pili* is in use even today, and it is considered inauspicious if it is not worn by a girl on her marriage. -

2 Here note the luxurious life led by the ancient Tamils.

Some of the ornaments and finery are mentioned. These have been examined by S. Somasundara Desikar in a contribution to *Kaṭaimagaḷ*, Vol. I, pp. 284-8.

3 This and the following lines show the number and variety of jewels and clothes in vogue in those ancient days. Some of them have now gone out of use.

4 *Pinṇāli* is the term used by the Commentators in this connexion.

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A pair of ear-rings, in which emeralds alternated with diamonds, glittered in her beautiful ears. In her dark tresses becoming head-ornaments such as *daivavutti* (also *sidēvi*), *valampuri* (also *talaippālai*, sea-conch), *toyyakam* and *pullakam* were set.¹ She (*Mātavi*) gave Kōvalan the happiness of union and of *ūṭal*, and stayed in her excellent nuptial chamber.

It was the full moon day in that ancient, awe-inspiring city. When she saw

people in search of amusement hurrying to the beach, fragrant with the *tālai*, Mātavi became eager to follow them. At that time the swan uttered its cry from lotuses in the tanks; cocks sent out their clarion call betokening the approach of the dawn; Venus² shone on high, and darkness died away.

Kōvalan wore sparkling jewels on his garlanded chest, and like the prodigal cloud, mounted his mule, while the deer-eyed Mātavi got into her chariot (*vaiyam*).³ They passed through the bazaar street beautified by towering mansions in which rich merchandise was stored in a million bundles. Here the beautiful lamps were glittering and some were decked with flowers.

1 This is said to be a head ornament of two sections called

tenpalli and *vaṭapalli*.

2 Tam., *velli*; Sans., *sukra*.

3 This vehicle may be *kollāvaṇṭi*, a

cart drawn by bullocks,

or kūtārappaṇṭi, a cart with a hooded top.

The editor of the text

notes in this connexion that in the Malaināṭu
(p 182), the vehicle

is known as kōlarvaṇṭi. From this
description of Kōvalaṇ riding

a mule, and Mātavi a vehicle drawn by
bullocks, we have to infer

that these were used by persons of rank in
the early centuries of

the Christian era. The use of horses for
vehicles had not come
into practice.

Maidens (*tāsiyar*) everywhere scattered flowers,¹ tender grass (*aṛuku*), and paddy, as being auspicious, and shone in their jewels. In this street² the Goddess Lakṣmī seemed to dwell; and on its two sides people were passing irregularly.

They then entered into the central highway of the city³ rich with the wealth of sea-borne goods and reached the *cēri* regions on the seashore where the flags on high seemed to say: 'In these stretches of white sand can be seen different kinds of goods brought in ships by foreign merchants, who have left their native homes and settled here.' There were burning the lamps of those who sold dyes, sandals, flowers, scents, and all varieties of sweets, the lamps of dexterous goldsmiths, the lamps of those who, sitting in a row, sold *piṭṭu*, the black broad lamps placed on lamp-stands by the sellers of muffins, the lamps in front of the miscellaneous shops of girl-vendors, the lamps of fishmongers glimmering here and there, beacon-lights erected to guide ships on the seashore,⁴ lamps taken out to sea by fishermen in their boats as they went a-fishing with nets, nightlong lights set up by foreigners⁵ speaking

1 The habit of ladies both in the evening and early morning.
Whether *Iṭaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ* by the term *tāsiyar*
cannot be said.

means prostitutes,

2 A description of the bazaar and other streets in Pukar before daybreak.

3 This is maruvūrppakkam and the bazaar street was in paṭṭinappakkam.

4 This bears testimony to the existence of lighthouses and a large volume of trade by sea.

5 This testifies to the custom of lighting the streets. See

Perumpāṇā , ll. 349-51; Maṇi., canto i, l. 16;

Puṇam., st. 60,

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different languages, and finally the lamps lit by the watch-men of (the warehouses containing) valuable merchandise.

The illumination of all these lights which were beyond counting, was so great that the seashore¹ with its aloe hedges appeared more beautiful than the cultivated tracts with their fragrant lotus-ridges; even a small mustard-seed could be seen if it lay on the fine sands stretched out like fine flour.

Thither came creeper-like Mātavi with a group of her playmates. There lay in repose ships which were filled with countless legions of hill-produce and sea-produce.²

In one place on the seaside were grouped together princes and their retinue, as also merchant princes and their confidantes; there were again other groups of maidens skilled in dance and song, in curtained enclosures. Their multi-coloured clothes and many-sounding tongues³ resembled the uproar inevitable on the festive occasion when king Karikāla⁴, whose great fame reached the celestial world, celebrated the first freshes in the Kāverī, and came to be mingled with the

unceasing tumult caused

1 Here follows a fine description of the beach in the evening.

2 This again testifies to the rich sea-borne trade.

3 See Akam., st. 376.

4 Cila., canto vii, l. 4. This shows that some festivity was

connected with the first freshes. It may be noted in passing that

the Coḷa king, Karikāla was the originator of the festival of the

first freshes of the Kāvēri. This is quite in keeping with the state-

ment of the Paṭṭinappālai that he was the founder of the capital Kāvēripaṭṭinam. Being Kāvirināṭaṅ or the Lord of the Kāvēri tracts, it is but natural that Karikāla was impelled by desire to institute a festival for the great service done by the river especially to the Coḷa-dēśa. A modern relic of this ancient festival is

by men and women of the four castes
crowding on the

narrow place where the great river Kāvāri joined
the sea.

In the midst of that tumult the long-eyed
Mātavi, soft

as a flower, took the pleasure-giving
tuneful-stringed lute

from the hands of the fatigued Vasantamāla. There, on a
white-legged couch with a canopy of picturesque paint-
ings,¹ surrounded by a screen set on the newly-spread
sands in the shade of a *puṇṇai* tree standing in the wide
expanse enclosed by the flowering *kaitai* which swept
away the foulness of the (fish-smelling) sea, Mātavi enjoy-
ed the company of Kōvalan.

what is known as the *patinettāmpērūkku*, literally
freshest on the

18th day of the month of Āṭi.
It is a social function in which

children, ladies and others take part. On the
evening of that day,

food of different kinds is taken to the riverside
and after prayers

to the river for its continual flow, the members
of the family par-
take of the food.

The children float old books, cadjan leaves,
and sometimes manuscripts of rare books in
the floods, and swim
in the water and enjoy themselves in different
ways.

1

Further evidence of the art of painting in the

Tamiṇāṭu.

CANTO VII

KANALVARI

OR

THE SEASHORE SONG

Kaṭṭurai

AFTER worshipping with her hands Mātavi

removed the lute faultless in respect of *pattar*,¹ *kōṭu*,² *āṇi* and strings, from its fancy-coverings, its body adorned with flowers, which looked like a beauteous bride with her black eyes darkened with collyrium. And she began to produce its eight different sounds, *paṇṇal*, *parivaṭṭaṇai*, *ārāital*, *tai-varal*, the majestic *celavu*, *viḷaiyāṭṭu*, *kaiyūl*, and the sweet *kuṟumpōkku*, in order to satisfy herself as to their correctness. Her lustrous little fingers ornamented with ruby rings manipulating the different strings resembled a hive of humming-bees. Next she tested by ear the eight different tunes,³ *vārtal*, *vaṭṭital*, *untal*, *uraḷtal*, the fair *uruttal*, *teruttal*, *aḷḷal*, and the beautiful *paṭṭaṭai*. Passing the instrument to Kōvalan's outstretched hand, she said, 'It is not my object to command. Please let me know the *tālam*.' He too began playing odes to the Kāvēri and

1 The Cīvakacīntāmaṇi styles these four faults as diseases

of the viṇa (st. 1720).

2 Parimēlaḷakar speaks of these 161 as pāṭaltoḷil (duties).

Kuraḷ, st. 573, and Naccinārkkinīyar on the Civaḷacināmāṇi (st. 657) speaks of them as kalaittoḷil. What these eight terms mean are explained in extenso by Arumpatavuraiācīriyar.

3 See the commentary of Arumpatavuraiācīriyar; also

Poruṇar, l. 23, where four of these eight tunes

C—13

are mentioned.

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songs appropriate to the seashore
(kāṇalvari)¹ to the great delight of Mātavi.

TO THE KAVERI²

‘Hail to thee, Kāverī! Even if our Cōla king, whose garlanded parasol is as white as the moon, extends his righteous sceptre far and weds the Ganges,³ thou wilt not sulk. I have learnt, O fish-eyed one, that not sulking, even though he weds the Ganges, is the supreme virtue of chaste ladies. Hail to thee Kāverī!

‘If our king, whose garlanded umbrella is white and stable, extends his unbending sceptre far, weds Kānnī (Kanyākumari), O Kāverī! thou wilt not sulk. Hail to thee! I have learnt that not sulking, fish-eyed Kāverī, even if he weds Kanyākumari,⁴ is the mighty virtue of ever-chaste ladies. Live long, O Kāverī!

‘Hail to thee, Kāverī! Thou walkedst (flowed) along,
listening to the songs of the ploughmen,⁵ the resonance of

the sluices, the roar of the breaking waters, and the noise

1 Kaṭarkāṇal-varippāṇi is of two kinds: teyvamcutṭiya-

varippāṭṭu and makkaḷaiccutṭiya-varippāṭṭu. Of these two the

former consists of kūṭaicceyyuḷ and vāracceyyuḷ.

2 Stanzas 2-4 go by the name of āṇṇuvarī,

a river.
literally an ode to

3 The implication is that the Cōla king's sway,
as has been
already said, extended upto the Ganges tracts in the
north.

4 The southern limit of the Cōla kingdom
was Kanyā-
kumari, the Cape Comorin of modern days.

5 This points to the fertility of the
soil and testifies to the
irrigational works on the Kāvēri tracts. Cf.
Paṭṭinappalāi, II.

277-91; also A.S.S.I., Vol. IV, p. 204 ff.

'The Leyden Grant'. KANALVARI

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of the festive crowd celebrating thy freshes. 1
All this flow of thine, along with the din of
merrymaking, is expressive of the prosperity of
our king, who possesses soldiers with unbridled
tongues. Hail to thee, Kāvēri!

‘How can we innocent people understand, sir, that unrighteous men again and again show the sea-god⁸ to our lady with long eyes like dark flowers, and make pious vows only to be broken. Our city is Pukār where the water-lily opens its blossoms at the sight of white conch bracelets and pearls, mistaking them for the moon and constellation of stars which spread their white rays.

‘How can we know, sir, of those lovers, who approach us on this beach from behind, with presents in their hands, and then turn out to be, strangers expecting us to beg of them? Our home is Pukār where the bee is bewildered, unable to distinguish the (blue) eyes of maidens from two blue flowers blooming in the reflection of the moon (on the waters).

1 The first freshes of the year in the Kāvērī were the occasion of a carnival in which all

classes of people from the king down to the peasant took a leading part. Tamil tradition is that Karikāla was the originator of this festival. See p. 129, supra.

2 Stanzas 5-7 are a glowing description of the richness and simplicity of the city of Pukār. These words are spoken by the heroine's maid to her mistress's lover, who has come with a present in his hand. The theme (*turai*) of these stanzas is said to be *-varaivu-kaṭṭayavai*. The idea is that the maid pretends to refuse presents and seems to insist on a regular marriage.

3 The sea-god described is Varuṇa. According to Sanskrit tradition he is the Lord of all waters, and figures prominently in the Vēdic pantheon.

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‘Our city, sir, is Pukār where the sounding conch is

buffeted by the big dashing waves and is driven ashore and ruins our maidens’ sand-castles,¹ These maidens, the flowers in whose hair are loosened and sway about, grow

angry, and plucking the water-lilies from their garlands with tender fingers they throw them at the conch. Passers-by seeing these (flowers scattered on the ground) think they are observing eyes.'

Again

'To wipe out the appearance of the ploughed sands in which the conches lay buried, the heavily-flowering *punnai* had scattered its pollen-laden flowers on that sea-shore. The straight fish-shaped eyes in her full-moon face have caused love sickness incurable by medicine, but curable by the lady's soft and yellow-spotted breasts.'

'Pretending⁸ to drive away the birds hovering around the foul-smelling dried fish on the beach, a maid holds in her hands fragrant jasmine from a young plant, with swarms of bees roaming about her. She is a goddess who dwells there in the sweet-smelling grove of flowers. Had I known of the existence of this

goddess⁴ there, I would not have come.

1. In the open yard before fishermen's huts where their nets are dried, Death,⁵ assuming the form of a maiden with

1.

One of the pastimes of the girls in the littoral tracts.

2 This stanza suggests that this is the only medicine for curing lovesickness. These words are spoken by the lover's companion who sees signs of love in the heroine, Cf. infra st. 45.

3 This and the following stanza go by the name of kāṇal - vari.

4 The goddess is the lady-love herself.

5 For a description of Death in a maiden's guise, see Tirukkural, st. 1083, and Kaṭittokai, st. 56, l. 9.

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long lance-like eyes, dwells on the foreshore where the waves beat the sands. There, with a wreath of flowers in her hand, she guards the fish dried for sale. 'Had I known that she was here, I would not have come at all.' (So said the lover.)

Again¹

'Behold! This is the moon, this perfected picture of the face in which eyes have been painted like fish, brows like a bow and curls of hair like clouds in which Cupid's power is revealed. O tell me, has the moon left the wide sky in fear of the serpent (Rāhu)² and sought shelter in this little hamlet where fishermen dwell?

'Behold! Her eyes resembling a blood-stained lance* glance from side to side, to view the conch-shells cast on the shore. They are fierce Death. Has fierce Death assumed the form of a graceful young damsel, and come to live in this little village on the

seashore?

‘Behold! This is the goddess who drives away birds from where the fish are spread to dry and who causes dire sickness to those who gaze at her. Has that goddess come to the cool seaside thick with hare-leaf (*aṭumpu*) in the form of a damsel with five plaits of hair?’⁴

1 Stanzas 11-13 are put in the mouth of the lover who, on seeing his lady-love in front of him, rapturously breaks forth into description of her.

2 Rāhu is an evil planet like Kētu. Legend has it that Rāhu has only a head, while Kētu has only a body and possesses no face. Both are supposed to cause eclipses according to the mythical account transmitted by the Purāṇas.

3 Red in the eyes of ladies is a sign of their youthful love. Hence the eye is compared to a blood-stained lance. The eye here stands for the person possessing such eyes.

4 Another reference to the hair being dressed in five plaits.

Again¹

'The fragrant flowers of this grove, the fresh sweet smell of these spreading sands, the faultless words of this damsel, her big youthful breasts, her face resembling the full moon, her bow-like curved brows, and her lightning waist that baffles the painter's brush;² it is these that have caused distress to me.

'This open seashore with its dashing billows, this stretch

of shining sand, these flowers that send forth their sweet

scents, this pleasant thick grove the fragrance-spreading

tresses, this face like the moon, and this pair of carp-like

eyes; all these have caused distress to me.

'This beach where shells are scattered in heaps, this

fine grove which charges the air with its fragrance, these

flowers that scatter their soft petals, these

haunts where
she moves about alone, her young teeth
which look like
new-sprouting shoots (from the soil), her
face that vies
with the full moon, and her two youthful
breasts; it is
these that have caused distress to me.'

Again³

'Your elder brothers go
out into the sea and live
by killing living things (fish); you, on the
other hand,
enter into my body and live by killing me.
Pray do
not lose your slender waist which is in
danger of being

1 Stanzas 14-16 are put into the mouth of
addressing his comrade.

the hero as

2 Another reference to show
been developed to a large extent in

that the art of painting had
the second century A.D.

3 Stanzas
heroine!

17-19 are the words of the hero addressing the

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overwhelmed by the weight of your beauteous
and well-moulded breasts.¹

‘Your father kills the living things (of the
sea by catch-

ing them) in the cruel meshes of his net.’ You, on the
other hand, kill lives by catching them in the net of your
long eyes. Pray do not lose your lightning-like waist,
which is at the point of breaking, owing to the weight of
your breasts decked with pearl-strings.

‘By means of swift boats, your elder
brothers kill lives (fish). You kill lives with

your curved brows. Your fame consists in witnessing the distress you cause in others. Pray do not lose your slender waist which faints under the weight of your breasts!'³

Again⁴

'The red eyes of the damsel who holds the coral pestle in her hand and pounds the white pearls in the mortar,⁵ the red eyes of her who pounds white pearls are not lilies, for, O, they are so cruel!

'The red eyes of the damsel who walks the walk of a swan in the shade of the *punnai* where the waves dash

1 The term *mitāl* in the text means literally 'strength.'

'of abounding

2 The eyes and the waist of the lady are compared respectively to the meshes of a net and to lightning.

3 In these three stanzas 17-19 the hero makes

a passionate appeal to the heroine to yield and to subject him to no more uncertainty

4 Stanzas 20-23 are put into the mouth of the hero's companion when he hears his words of passion.

5 See below, canto xxix, 'Vallaippattu', l. 6. The coral pestle and the pearl powders seem to confirm that the city was noted for abundant pearls and coral.

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against the foul-smelling shore; the red
eyes of her who
walks the walk of a swan are frightful;
verily they are
death, death!

The red eyes of the damsel who holds
honey-laden

violet; in her hand and scares away the
birds that hover

around the dried fish, the red eyes of her who
scares away

the birds are not innocent darts; verily they
are so cruel,
cruel!

Again

'O foolish swan! Do not go near her, do
not go; your
gait cannot rival hers. O foolish swan! do
not go near
her, do not go; your gait cannot rival hers.
O foolish
swan! do not approach her, who roams about
stirring the
waters of the sea as the waves fall one after
another (on
the shore), for your gait cannot rival hers. Do
not go.'

The Narrative

At that time, Matavi of the long beautiful

eyes, who listened to the sea-song (of Kōvalan), feeling that his song was indicative of a change of attitude on his part, took the lute from him pretending that she was pleased though (really) sulking. Then she began to play, purposefully, an ode to the sea so fine that the goddess Earth¹ wondered at her skill; and all people were in ecstasy when they heard her sweet voice appropriately accompanying the notes of the lute.

TO THE KĀVERI²

Hail to thee, Kāveri! clothing thyself in a garb of fair flowers where bees cluster murmuring their songs, thou

1 A relic of the primitive concept Mother and Goddess.

of calling the Earth

2. Stanzas 25-27 go by the name of *agruvari* or a kind of ancient song to the river. Here the righteous rule of the Coja.

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walkedst along with swaying steps, with
carp-like dark

eyes. All this walk of thine, with thy
carp-like dark eyes, is, I know, due to thy
husband's righteous sceptre which does not
deviate from the right path.¹ Hail to thee,
Kāverī!

‘Hail to thee, Kāverī! When thou
movedst along and thy lovely garland swayed,
the peacock strutted along the flowery grove,
and the keel sent forth its mirthful notes; I
have learnt that this walk, with thy lovely
gar-land moving, is attributable to the might of
thy husband's frightful lance. Hail to thee,
Kāverī!

‘As a mother tends her babe so thou

wilt not cease from everlasting help to the fertile country of him (our king) who is prosperous to the end of all time. This enduring help which thou renderest unceasingly is attributable to the grace of our king of the solar race, who, with his wheel of righteousness, confers protection on all.* Hail to thee, Kāverī!

TO PUKĀR

‘O sir, you come every day, like the God of love,² and

ask us to receive pearls, which are no match for the bright

king and the fertility of his kingdom are in evidence, the latter mostly due to the Kāverī. Thus we find that the glorification of the Kāverī is an important theme in all early Tamil poetry in general and of the Silappatikāram in particular.

1 These are the primary duties of a righteous monarch. The Sanskrit term pālanam or paripālanam

connotes the idea that protection of subjects is the chief duty of a king. See, for example, Rāmāyaṇa, Bk. II, ch. 106, st. 19.

2

This may also refer to the impartiality of the king.

3. The theme of stanzas 28-30 is the glory of Pukār, the quondam capital of the Coḷas.

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teeth shining between the coral lips of our lady
whose face

is like the full moon.

Our city is Pukār where the surg-

ing ocean, like a dealer, exchanges

lustrous pearls for

wreaths of flowers.

‘Sir, these bracelets of the fair-armed
ladies, the

damsels of sturdy fishermen, make known

(by becoming

loose)¹ that they have been married in
secret.² We are

innocent. How can we understand all this?
Our city is

Pukār where the water-lily, with the
murmuring bee in-

side, blossoms at the sight of the swan resting
in the midst

of the flower-laden branches of the long
punnai, imagining

them to be the full moon and stars.

How can we know,
sir, in these regions where wine
overcomes the consumer while the
consumption cannot be

concealed, the fact that you cause sickness,
incurable by

any medicine, to ladies? Our city is Pukār
where, when

the waves destroy the houses of sand, sharp
javelin-like

eyes* in their full-moon faces shed tears of sorrow. Then

gathering handfuls of sand we throw them against the

waves imagining that the sea will be filled up.

Again

‘Although he saw* the male crab with the female crab and saw me also in this fair park thick with its clusters of

1 See in this connexion Kalittokai, ‘Kuriñci,’ st. 17, ll. 8-11.

2 It is a reference to the kaḷavu system of marriage. The term marai in the text is significant.

3 The idea here is that waves rise like sharp

javelins as if

to meet the moon in the sky and dash against the sporting-ground of these fisher-maids. Thinking foolishly that they could arrest the progress of the fill up the sea.

waters, they throw sand into the deep as if to

4. Stanza 31

describes the feelings of the heroine and shows her inability to gauge the love of her lord.

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flowers, the lord of the maritime tract, taking leave of his senses, deserted us of the five plaits. O girl with curly hair, I do not know his reason.

‘Has’ he taken with him his sympathy and his horse-chariot, and gone without thinking of us? O fair-blossomed hare-leaf creepers! O swans! Let him abandon us. Yet shall we not forget him who has forgotten us.

‘O *neytal* flower laden with honey like my weeping eyes at the distressing nightfall, thou feelest no trouble but dost sleep. In thy dreams

dost thou see my hard-hearted (lover) as he approaches this seaside?

‘When he dashed along with the speed of birds in his chariot drawn by horses, thou ruinedst the route wherever he went (his path), O clear waters of the sea. What can I do, O clear waters of the sea? Thou hast become at one with those who are spreading scandal around me here. What shall I do? Thou dost not know my woes.

‘O waves! The ruts caused by the passing of the strong, big chariot of my perfect lover! were ruined. O cool grove! O swan, sporting with thy mate! O wet shore! Will not you all tell my lover that (his deed) is not just?

‘Bless you, O waves! You destroyed the by the wheels of my perfect lover’s strong, ruts caused

big chariot.

You destroyed the ruts on the way. At the same time you pretended to be a friend of mine. Hail, you waves! You are no friend.'

1 Stanzas 32-36 represent the lament of the heroine at the neglect and indifference of her lover. She aimlessly addresses the hare-leaf, the neytal flower, the waves, the grove, and the **EWAN**.

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Again¹

'O lord of the sea, whose waves dash as far as the paddy fields, enrobed in beautiful corals and decked with excellent ornaments made of well-formed pearls! The fresh wounds caused in the *punnai* park by the shafts of Cupid, who owns the flag of the *makara* fish, cover her body and make her unrecognizable; but if her mother sees her thus, what shall I do?

‘O lord of the maritime tract, whose waves, smiling with their pearl-like teeth and opening their coral lips, spread over the courtyard where the fishermen’s nets are (left for drying), what shall I do if her mother, seeing that this innocent damsel has changed her colour to that of the *pīra* flower that blossoms during winter, consults the deity* and finds out who did this cruel act?

‘O lord of the maritime tract, whose waves move

about to destroy the fishy smell of the beach and penetrate

the cool grove spreading it with the fragrance of different

fallen flowers,⁸ my lady suffers mental anguish but the

cause of her illness is not known.

If this unknown disease

is detected by her mother who will be pained at it, what shall I do?”

1 Stanzas 37-39 have for their theme the varaivu-kaṭavly-avai. These are the words of the maid who is afraid of the discovery of signs of love in her mistress by the latter's mother.

Anxious to see her wedded the maid thus addresses the lover.

2 This points to the custom of consulting deities to rectify wrongs when ever trouble occurs.

3 The reference is to old and withered flowers that have fallen down from the tree.

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*Again*¹

‘The evening darkness has spread everywhere. The Day-maker (the sun) has disappeared. My eyes shed tears of sorrow from which it is impossible to recover. O fair one whose locks of hair are decked with open-petalled flowers! Is this maddening, fiery

twilight, which loosens my bangles,² found in the country of the deserter?

‘The sun has disappeared. Thick darkness has spread everywhere. Collyrium-eyes, that look like opening flowers, shed tears of sorrow. O fair one whose face looks like the young moon! Is this maddening twilight, which comes vomiting the moon and devouring the sun,³ found in that country to which he has gone?

‘The birds have stopped singing. The Lord of the

Day has disappeared. These long eyes suffer from the pain of shedding unceasing tears. O fair one whose

tresses contain blossoming flower-buds! Is this maddening twilight which attacks my life,⁴ found in the country of the deserter?’

Again⁵

‘Someone came to the *kaitai* fence through the swamps

(near the sea) and spoiled our sport. He who

went away:

1 Stanzas 40-42 represent the distress of the heroine at eventide when she thinks of the country in which her lover has tarried. She addresses her maid.

2 The idea is that maidens feel the separation of their lovers

keenly when night sets in, so that their bodies grow thin and their bangles hang loose.

3 The idea is that the sun has set and the moon has risen.

4 The heroine considers evening her cruel enemy.

5 Stanzas 43-45 are again the words of the maid to her lady. In Tamil love poetry the maid sometimes identifies herself so

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-spoiling our sport, would not leave my love-stricken mind.

Through the swamps, fenced by the

the sea, someone came and stood before us

park, close to

saying "Make

me pleased". He who stood before us saying
"Make me pleased" could not be excluded from
our deer-like glances.

'Seeing the swan playing with its mate,
one stood looking on all yesterday. He, who
stood looking on

yesterday, would not leave (our minds) even
as the gold-tinted moles¹ cannot leave our body.'

*Also*²

'Come not here, O crane! Come not
near our park. Come not here, O crane,
come not near our park; for you

will not speak of my present love-sickness to
my lord of the maritime tract. Come not, O
crane! Do not approach
our park.'

Also

Singing thus in the mode in which
Kōvalan had sung,
the beautiful damsel (Mātavi) again exhibited
with her rosy little fingers the charm of the
*ceṇṇaḷippālai*³ in which

closely with the heroine that she speaks for the heroine. Here is
an open declaration of her abiding faith in the lover who has
deserted her, as she thinks, for the time being only. Alternatively
these stanzas may be interpreted in another way. The first two
lines of each of these three stanzas can be taken as the words of
the maid and the next two lines as the words of the heroine in
reply.

1 'Yellow spreading spots on the body of women, regarded
as beautiful'—Tamil Lexicon.

2 This address to the crane in stanza 45
represents the

lament of the lovesick heroine.

3 'A secondary
melody-type of the pālai class'—Tamil
Lexicon.

the *kaikkilai*¹ was joined with *kural*. She sang in suitable strains a new melody-type (*paṇ*).

Again²

‘O evening, during that charming
*vilarippālai*³ peculiar
to the residents of the maritime tract, you made
*iṭi*⁴ blended

with *kiṭai* (*kaikkiṭai*). O evening, even as
you made *iṭi*

join with *kiṭai*, you are able to take away my
life. Please

yourself. May you live long!

‘O evening, you go to take away the
life of people

who live dolefully seeking solace in the
greatly comforting

parting-words of their separated lovers. If you
thus besiege

them, O evening, you will be the
invading king from

outside besieging the fortress of the
enemy-king⁵. Is it
not so?

‘O maddening twilight, you came with
the setting of

the Lord of the Day, augmenting my
distress, when the

world began to close its eyes. If you are
the maddening

twilight, and if he be my wedded lord,
the world has

1 ‘Poem in five viruttam verses of
unreciprocated love’—

ibid. This song shows that her love is one-sided
and not reci-

procated by the other party.

2 The three stanzas 48-50 represent the
passionate outburst

of the heroine at the approach of the evening. Cf.
stanzas 40-2.

supra.

3 Vilari is a descending musical scale.

4 Iḷi is the pañcamasvaram and the sixth kaikkḷai is its in-

lmical string. Instead of playing on the iḷi string the fingers

automatically went to the enemy-string at that time, due to illu-

sion of the mind.

5 The reference is to the uḷṇaitṇai and the noccittṇai, and

represents the monarch outside forcing an entry into the fortress

and the defending king inside.

(See Tolk. 'Poruḷ', sūtra 65.)

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become impoverished indeed.¹ Bless thee,
maiden

at twilight!

Again²

‘O god of the sea, we worship your lotus-feet. At this cruel maddening, fiery twilight, our lover departed, without considering the effects of his vow made in this flowery park, with words removing all our mental pain. Please forgive his false vow.’

Hearing this, Kōvalan said, ‘I sang the *kāṇalvarī*; but she, the cunning one combining several deceitful lies, sang with her mind upon someone else.’ Prompted by Fate which made the music of the lute its pretext,¹ he slowly withdrew his hands from the embrace of his full-moon-faced lady-love, and said ‘Since the day has come to a close, we shall make a move’. But she did not get up at once. After Kōvalan had gone away with his retinue of servants, Matavi rose up, and silencing the group of maids who were making a noise in the grove filled with

the pollen of flowers, she betook herself home, getting into

her carriage, with a sad heart, unaccompanied by her lover, and saying,

1 She believes that everybody in the world must feel alike

at nightfall.

2 The lover has been separated for a long time. Knowing secretly that he had returned and was waiting for an opportunity to meet the heroine, the maid addresses the god of the sea so as to be heard by the lover.

3 Here the author introduces the theory of *prarabdhakarma*, that the effects of our actions in a previous birth have to run their course, do what we will.

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‘May the garlanded white parasol of Cembayan (Cōla king), who with his fiery sword and his elephant with an ornamental plate on its face makes all the princes of this vast world bow their heads, bring entire Cakravāḷa¹ mountain!’

under its shadow the

1 A mythical range of mountains encircling the orb of the earth.

CANTO VIII

VENIR KATAI

OR

THE ADVENT OF SUMMER

THE celebrated king Māraṇ (Cupid) with his delightful

friend Spring held sway over the fertile Tamil country, bounded in the north by the Tirupati hills¹ sacred to Viṣṇu, and in the south by the Kumari sea,² having for its capitals high-towered Madura, Uraṇtai³ of great renown, awe-inspiring Vañci, and Pukar with its resounding waters. This approach of (Spring) was heralded by the ambassador, the South Wind, hailing from the fertile Potiyil hill sacred to the revered saint (Agastya). As if to announce the herald's message, 'Put on your garb, O ye regiments of the fish-bannered prince, befitting your respective ranks,' the cuckoo, living in a grove rich in creepers, acted as the young trumpeter of Cupid's army⁴ and sounded his note.

1 The northern and southern limits of the Tamil country are furnished here. Once there was a river by name the Kumari, near the place which is now known as Cape Comorin. It has been swallowed by the sea. That the sea eroded into the interior as far as the river Pahrūḷi is evident from this canto, ll. 18-20 and corroborated by the Itaiyaṇār Akapporuḷ.

2 The Kumari sea is compared to a young lady decked with bangles. It is to be noted here that the two-capitals of the Coḷas are mentioned.

3 The Coḷa Perunaṅkiḷḷi was the king at this time at Uṇṇantal.

Puḷār was only the quondam capital.

4 Māraṇ, the God of Love, had for his fourfold army the four capitals of the Tamil land, for his ally the Spring, for his

Māṭavi of the long flower-like eyes who had returned alone, after her love-quarrel with Kōvalaṇ at the pleasure-park filled with open buds on the seashore, betook herself to her summer-retreat in a lofty upper story reaching the sky. That beautifully

adorned damsel decorated the expanse of her breasts which were already smeared with *kunkumum*, with pearls of the southern sea and sandal-paste of the southern hills. These were the unexceptional tributes appropriate to the season¹ which she offered with her own hands.

Taking the spotless lute in her grasp she began to sing a sweet song and fell into a languor which she overcame by assuming the *padmāsanam* posture in the nine series of postures (*viruttis*).²

With her right hand on the bend of the *vīṇa* in the attitude of the *patāhai* and with her left hand in that part of the instrument known as the *māṭakam*, she produced by the skill of her technique the notes *cempakai*, *ārppu*, *kūṭam*, and *atirvu*, avoiding discords.³ She thus played the series of fourteen tunes in the traditional mode, beginning with *ulai* and ending with *kaikkiṭai* carefully scruti- nizing the

respective notes of the strings known as *iṇai*,⁴

ambassador the South Wind and as his royal herald, blowing the trumpet, the koel or cuckoo.

1 This shows that different kinds of fragrant pastes were used by lovers according to the season.

2 Virutti is also known by another term, *iruppu*, explained by Aṭiyārkkuṇallār from dramatic and other treatises. See *Perumkatai*, 'Narumatai', ll. 44-8.

3 Cf. *Civakacintāmaṇi* st. 716-9, comm.

4 The second string.

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ciṭai,¹ *pakai*² and *naṭpu*.³

In this way she sang with udgement to the accompaniment of the *iṇi* string.

Later, in the same order, she sounded the fifth and the seventh strings beginning and ending with *uḷai*, and afterwards commencing and ending with *kural*. She tested her skill in the four modes of *akanilai-marutam*,⁴ *puṇanilai-marutam*, *marukiya-marutam*, and

perukiyal-marutam,⁵ keeping an eye upon the three *srutis* high, level and low and then began the *tirappan* born of the above-mentioned tunes. Soon she who looked like a flower-creeper was overcome by languor when she set her mind to play the tune called *vēṇirpāṇi*.

She took up a garland formed by tying together *camṇaka*, *mādavi*, *tamāla*, white jasmine, fragrant roots, and choice petals of the red lily intertwined with the white bent flowers of the ripe screw pine. On this she wrote, under the influence of Cupid who, single-handed, exercises his righteous sceptre over the vast world with his flowerarrows, and who is worshipped by the whole earth unexcepted, taking in her hand the long stalk of a flower and dipping it in the writing paste made of red lac and *agar*,⁶ as follows:—

- 1 The fifth string.
- 2 The sixth and the third strings.
- 3 The fourth string.

4 This and the following two are
supposed to have sixteen strings.

5 This has thirty-two strings.

The above are the four great classes of pan which is a melody-tape.

6 It is interesting to note the nature of the writing materials used for love letters.

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‘He who has come to rule the world is
the youthful

prince,¹ Spring, who brings together the
lovers and their

chosen ones. The moon who has risen
with the love-

anguish that shows itself in the evening, also
is not fault-

less. Therefore whether they be lovers who
had had union

and departed and were delayed in coming back,
or whether

they be lovers who had deserted and forgotten
their mates,

that this moon should kill the lonely poor
ones with his

sharp darts of fragrant flowers should be
no cause for

surprise. Please understand this.'

Thus evidencing her excessive love
wrote Māṭavi,

sallow-complexioned and well acquainted
with the sixty-

four arts² when her sweet tongue expressed in
musical *paṇ*

and *tīraṃ*, the tender tone of a lisping
child. She then

called aloud her maid Vasantamālā, on that
pensive even-

ing, and asked her to inform Kōvalaṇ of all
that had been

written on the flower-garland and to bring
him to her.

Receiving the garland, Vasantamālā of the lance-like long

eyes went to Kōvalan living in the quarter where grain

was stored, and handed it over to him.

Then

Kōvalan refused to receive the message saying:

‘The *kaṅkūtuvari*¹
performed by the loving maiden

having *tilaka* on her forehead, curls of hair adorned with

flowers, small black eyebrows, *kuvaḷai*-like eyes casting

love glances, *kumiḷ*-like nose, *kovvai*-like lips,

1 The implication is that
Spring being a youthful prince
cannot rule fairly and well.

2 Cf. Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra where the names of the sixty-

four arts are given.

3 One of the eight *vari*; a kind of dancing or, appropriately, gesture. It seems to have been a custom in

more appro-

ancient times

for the dancing-girls to take to *vari* as distinguished from the *kuravai* in which housewives took the leading part. This literally

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'The *kāṇvari*¹ dance of the black long-eyed dancer, who moved backward and forward by coming and going, with a moon-like face which seemed to groan under the weight of rain-bearing clouds of hair, whose eyes frisked about

like carps, and whose bewitching smile exposed pearl-white

teeth from within her coral-coloured sweet lips,

'The dance of Disguise (*uṣvari*³), performed by the dancer whose piercing eyes were as sharp as a spear and who noticed the poverty of my heart after my separation from her owing to a lover's quarrel, and being lonely appeared at the approach of eventide in the guise of her maid cheered me up with words as sweet as those of the parrot, with steps as entrancing as those of a swan, and with grace as ravishing as that of the peacock,

'The minor dance *puravari*³ which, drunk with passion,

she, whose slender waist could bear no ornaments,

danced, in front (of the house) to the tinkling of foot-orna-

ments and jingling waist-band (not embracing me) though

she knew that I was pining for her,

'The dance of *kiḷarvari*⁴ performed by her who had a

beautiful forehead, garlanded locks of hair, forelocks adorn-

ed with petals, a string of pearls, and beauteous breasts

means the first view of the heroine by the hero.
See Tamil

Lexicon, p. 184.

1

Dance performed at frequent and repeated intervals.

2 This was to disguise one's own form.

An example of

living incognito is that of the
Pāṇṭavas in the city of Virāṭa
king.

3 Dance where the heroine coldly neglects her
lover's com-
pany.

4 'Posture assumed by an offended lover or
love, when an
intermediary tries to conciliate'—Tamil Lexicon, p.

938,

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causing distress to her waist and who appeared languid with her sleek tresses devoid of all sheen after purposely misconstruing the message I sent to her through her maid-servant expressing my love for her,

‘The *tērcivari*¹ performed by her when reflecting and reflecting on her sufferings caused by my separation and by her unbearable love towards me, she expressed to my numerous relatives,

‘The *kāṭcivari*² which she performed when she wore the garland with bees buzzing on it and spoke about her distress to all onlookers,

‘And the *eṭuttukkōivari*³ which she danced one following the other, seeing which, those upon whom she fell in a swoon comforted her after bringing her to her senses,

‘All these dances, my dear girl bedecked with jewels, are quite natural to her because she is

only a dancing-girl.'

Thus when he refused to accept the
garland sent by
the bejewelled Mātavi, with the message
written on the
white *tālai* flowers of the screw-pine,
Vasantamālā was
sorrow-stricken at heart and wasted no time
in returning to
tell her mistress adorned with a flower
garland, what had
happened. Mātavi of the long flower-like
eyes, said in
reply : 'Fair lady, if he does not come this
night, we will
see him at least tomorrow morning' and sat
down with a
heavy heart on the couch spread with flowers,
sleepless.

1 'A dramatic action in which a person
expresses in detail
all his sufferings to his relatives'—Tamil Lexicon,

2 'Dance exhibiting sorrow and distress'—ibid., p. 848.

3 'Theatrical action of swooning in extreme anguish in order to be lifted up'—ibid., p. 515.

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When¹ the Spring came and the red lotus
petals the tender leaves of the sweet mango

opened its
tree hung

down, and the beautiful *asōka* blossomed. O, what
mental suffering has to be endured by our lady of the good
spear-like eyes!

When the cuckoo proclaimed 'O ye that quarrelled with your lovers,' it is the command of Cupid that you must love one another' (Vasantamāla remembered what she had said to Kōvalan). 'O you who enjoyed her sweet words in the seaside park, enjoy now these sweet words written on tender flowers by her who has been embraced by the Spring.'

1 Soliloquy of the hunch-backed Vasantamāla in taking the
ōla (message) from her mistress.

2 This is what is known as ūṭaḷ. See
Kaḷittokai, st. 92, 1.

61. It was a kind of 'love quarrel between the husband and wife,

arising from jealousy, peculiar to the agricultural tracts, one of
five *wripporu!*'.

KANATTIRAMURAITTA KATAI

OR

THE TALE OF THE DREAM

IN the evening when the sun disappeared,
ladies with
creeper-like waists sprinkled¹ lustrous
buds of *mullai*
flowers, just blossoming, and paddy grains in
their houses
in the big city; they lit their jewelled lamps
and attired
themselves in a manner appropriate to the
night.²

One day long ago, Malati fed her
co-wife's child with
milk; but the milk choked the child who
hiccoughed and
died. Being in a panic that her husband the
Brahman and
her co-wife would throw the blame upon her

and would

not accept the truth, Mālati took the dead
child in her arms

and went to the temple where stood the divine
kalpaka tree

(*amarartarukkōṭṭam*),² to the temple of the
white elephant

(*veḷyāṇaikkōṭṭam*)⁴ to the temple of the
beautiful white

god (*veḷḷainākarkōṭṭam*),⁵ to the temple of
the Sun who

rises in the east (*uccikkiṭāṅkōṭṭam*), to the
temple of the

city-god (*ūrkkōṭṭam*),⁶ to the temple of
the spear-god

1 Cf. *Neṭunalvātai*, ll. 39-44.

2 It appears that ladies had two kinds of
dresses: one for
the day and the other for the night.

3 *Kalpaka* was the divine tree in heaven,
whose fragrance
and flowers were enjoyed by *Indrāṇī*.

4 This is the Airāvata temple, the Airāvata being the mount of Indra, the king of heaven.

5 The temple of Balarāma.

6 The reference is to the god enshrined at Kailāsa, that is Siva.

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(*vērkkōṭṭam*),² to the temple of the Vajra (*vaccirakkōṭṭam*),² to the temple of the Deity who dwells outside the city (Aiyāṇar) (*purampanaiyānvāḷkōṭṭam*),³ to the temple of the Nigranthas (*niggantakkōṭṭam*),⁴ and to the temple of the Moon (*nilākkōṭṭam*)⁵ and besought all these gods thus: 'O ye gods! Relieve me of my great trouble.' Then she betook herself to the temple⁶ of the famous Śattan learned in the *sāstra* called *pāsaṇṇam* and besought his counsel.

At that time appeared before her one, a young creeper-

like girl, as if mocking others by her beauty, who said, 'O

faultless woman! God will not grant a boon to those who

have not performed penance. This is not a false state-

ment; it is a true saying: so hard to me this dead body.'

Saying that, she forcibly snatched the corpse from the (poor) woman's hands and went in the darkness, when all slept, to the ground *cuṭukāṭṭukkōṭṭam*⁷ where the goblin

1 This is the temple of Muruka.

2 Either it was a temple where Vajra specially was wor-

shipped or it is a reference to Indra's shrine.

1. 27.

Cf. Maṇi., canto i,

3 Aṭṭiyārkunallar identifies this with Sātavāhana's temple.

See Tolk. 'Sey.' sūtra 118, comm.

See also Divākaram, st. '12.

4 This was a Jaina temple.

5 Here is evidence of a separate temple

Moon-god.

dedicated to the

6 This and the above few lines show that as many as eleven temples were found in the city belonging to different cults. They also show that the worship of Indra, of the Moon, of the Sun, and of Balarama, which has now become practically extinct, was extant in the early centuries of the Christian era. In those days, it is also seen that the people worshipped at all temples including that of the Jaina and the pāṣaṇḍa (heretic gods). This demonstrates that there was no sectarian outlook in matters religious.

7 The cutukāṭṭukkōṭṭam can be identified with cakravajakōṭṭam mentioned in Maṇi., canto vi. Though it is difficult to fix

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Itākiṇi who eats buried dead bodies, took the child's corpse and devoured it. Before her who cried out like a peacock at the visitation of thunder, appeared the God Śattan,¹ who comforted her with the following words: 'O

mother ! Do not weep in your distress. Look before you and behold the living child.'

To fulfil the promise, the God himself assumed the form of that child and lay in the grove which was the haunt of cuckoos. The overjoyed Mālati took up this illusory child, clasped it to her bosom and (going home) handed it to its mother.

This divine Brahman child grew into a boy² and acquired a profound knowledge of the sacred scriptures.

Later, when his parents died, he settled all disputes among their relations, and performed all the religious obsequies due to them.³ Afterwards he

married a lady named

Tēvanti and lived with her (for some time) saying 'May your flower-like eyes bear this (divine) sight.'

(One day) he appeared to her in his eternal form of youth and then vanished asking her to go to his shrine.

After he had gone with those inspiring words, Tavantī, who was worshipping at his temple every day, gave out as the date of the origin of the institution of cremation, It seems reasonable to suppose that it is as old as that of burial.

1 Sattan can be identified with Sāsta now enshrined in the Sāsta temples which are generally found on the outskirts of villages. See article 'Aśoka's Religion' in J.O.R., 1930, p. 278.

2 A brahmacārī.

3 The svadharma of a Brahman brahmacārī and householder

which is furnished here agrees with what is prescribed in the

Dharmaśāstras and the Dharmasūtras. For
the six duties incumbent on the householder see Hindu
Administrative Institutions,
pp. 188-9.

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a pretext¹ (for his absence) 'He has
left me saying that
he will visit all the sacred places.
Please bring him back
to me.'

Having come to know
that the good lady Kāṇṇaki of
undiminished repute had cause for
distress, and thinking of
it with a sorrowful heart, Tevanti
worshipped the god for

her sake with (offerings of) *aṛuku*,
(*Aerua lanata*) and
paddy, and went (to Kaṇṇaki), with
the blessing 'May
you get back your husband.'

But Kaṇṇaki replied, 'Though I may get
him back, my heart will still be pained; for I have
had a dream.² It was thus. We went, hand in
hand, to a great city. There some people
belonging to the city said something which was
unbearably unjust. Some crime was thrown
upon Kōvalaṇ. It stung me like a
scorpion-bite. Hearing it, I pleaded before the
protecting king. The king as well as the city
would witness a great calamity. I shall not say
more because it was a bad dream. O lady
with close-fitting bangles, if you listen
to the evil deed done to me and the happy
results³ achieved by me and my husband, you
will laugh (in derision).'

Tēvanti replied: 'O lady wearing golden

bangles! You have not been discarded by your husband. This trouble is due to your having failed to perform a vow in a former birth.

If you wish to wipe off that evil, go to the spot where the Kāverī meets the roaring sea. There is a park where the *neytal* opens its petals, and where two

1 To those who asked her why she was she used to answer thus.

staying at the shrine,

2 Note how the dream came true.

3 The evil deed is the plucking off of her breasts. The happy results are the attainment of heaven.

KANATTIRAMURAITTA KATAI

the Moon (Sōmakuṇḍam)¹

the Sun (Sūryakuṇḍam) and
respectively. Those women
who bathe in them and worship the God of love²
enshrined there, will ever enjoy the company
of their husbands in
this world.
būmi). We

Besides they will also attain Heaven (*Bōga-*
shall go there one day to bathe.'

But bejewelled Kaṇṇaki said in reply to
the charm-
ing lady, 'That is not proper'³ and sometime
after this
a young maidservant approached her and
said, 'Our
Kōvalaṇ has arrived at the gate. It looks as
if he will
protect us for a long time.' Kōvalaṇ went into
the house and entering the
bedchamber was stricken with grief at

the sight of the pale Kaṇṇaki, his fair wife,
 and said, 'By
 consorting with a false woman who makes every
 false thing appear like truth,
 I have lost the rich store of my ancestral
 wealth. O, the poverty I have caused (to
 our house) makes me ashamed of
 myself.'

Comforting him with a fascinating smile on
 her bright- ening face, she replied,
 'O, do not grieve! You yet have my
 anklets. Accept them '4 Then Kōvalan
 retorted, 'O, my good girl, listen.
 I will use this anklet as my capital

1 In a note Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar seems to identify these
 with Sōmatīrtham and Sūryatīrtham in Tiruvenkāṭu. The Paṭṭin-
 appālai (Paṭṭuppāṭṭu), l. 39, refers to these as irukāmatṭaiyēri,
 the lakes which give one's desire.

2 The reference is to a temple of Maṇmatha or the God of
 Love. Though festivals in his honour
 have no separate temples to this deity.
 and cīvakaśintāmaṇi, st. 1598.

are still conducted, we
Cf. Paṭṭinappāla, I. 39,

3 This is in keeping with the sentiment of the Kuṛaḷvenpā, st. 55, where it is stated that chaste ladies offer worship to no God but their husbands.

4 Kaṇṇaki spoke thinking that Kōvalan wanted to take some more ornaments to the dancing-girl Mātavi.

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to recover all the jewels and all the wealth I have lost.¹ Rise up, O lady with the tresses decorated with choice flowers! Come with me to the city of Madura highly renowned for its tower.' Impelled by fate he decided to start before the heavy darkness of the night was dispelled by the Sun.

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The dream dreamt by his wife made the words of the black and long-eyed

Mātavi empty. Early, before the sun dispelled the darkness of night, (Kōvalan and his wife) started, impelled by fate which had decreed long ago.

their doom

1 The author seems to infer from the life of Kōvalan that the leading of an immoral life will result in the loss of all wealth and property.

CANTO X

NATUKAN KATAI

OR

THE SIGHT OF THE KINGDOM

ON the last day on which the last watch of the night was dark,¹ when the eye of the sky (the sun) had not opened, and when the white moon that shone in the company of the stars had vanished, Kōvalan and forth driven by their fate.

(Kaṇṇaki) started

Having passed out of their tall outer

gate with its very famous latched door² where the goat and the yak and the swan³ with its soft down were roaming about in a sense of kinship, they circumambulated the temple sacred to Maṇivaṇṇan (Viṣṇu) sleeping his all-perceiving sleep⁴ on his beautiful serpent-couch. Going beyond it they left

1 The Indra festival commenced on Saturday, Citrāpauṇami, and continued for 28 days ending with Monday (Star Anusam) of the month of Vaikāṣi and resulting in the ūṭal of Kōvalan and Mātavi. The journey to Madura by Kōvalan was begun the next Tuesday, when the star Kāṭṭal was in the ascendant. (See Aṭiyārkkuṇallār's commentary). This calculation is incorrect.

2

formed
it.

The idea here is that when the gate was made, the an integral part of it. It means it was not separate

latch
from

3 It would appear from the commentary that these domesticated animals were also artistically carved on the gateway. If so it bears evidence that wood carving was practised in the ancient Tamil land.

4 Yoganidra of Viṣṇu. This demonstrates that Kōvalan and Kannaki offered prayers to the Viṣṇava deity. Later it is

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behind them the seven *viḥāras*¹ made
by Indra, where

divinities moving in the sky explained
treatises on *dharma*,

which were the divine words of the
Aravōṇ (the Buddha),²

under the cool shade of the green
*bōdi*³ tree which had

five lofty branches.

They then worshipped, and went
round the highly shin-

ing *silātala*,⁴ jointly built by the Jaina

householders for the

benefit of the Cāraṇar⁵ who would
assemble, on festive

days, such as the day of the first
freshes (in the Kāvērī)

and of the car-festival, under the
entrancingly cool shade

of the golden flowered *asōka* tree,
standing on a high

platform where all the five *termini* sacred
to the five great

yōgins converged.⁶ There gathered the
men of penance

who had abjured meat eating, and taken
the vow, of speak-

ing the truth alone, and purified
themselves of all sins,

understanding the true path by restraining
their senses.⁷

said that they worshipped at the Jaina *śilātala*. This
bears testi-

mony to the fact that there was little difference

between earlier Jainism and the orthodox religion.

1 See canto xxvii, l. 92 infra. The literal meaning of the

term vihāra is 'not constructed either by hand or by machinery;' it is a mind-born institution. See Mañl., canto xxvi, l. 55 and canto xxviii, l. 70.

2 See Mañl., canto xxi, l. 48.

3 Mābōdī is a tree with five branches. Mañl., canto xxx, l.

10. Bodimūlam (mahābōdī) is the aśvattha tree under which Gautama Buddha saw the great light.

4 It was made of candrakānta or moonstone.

5 The Jaina Cāraṇar are under reference. They visited Pukār on certain festival days. The tree sacred to them was the aśoka.

6 These yogis are commonly known as Pañcaparamēṣṭins. They are Arhat, Siddha, Ācārya, Upadhyāya and Sādhu.

7 The practice of the Sāvakas is referred to.

They then passed beyond the entrance-gate (of the city), which looked like a long river with its source in a hill, and reached the outer wall which enclosed a lake and a grove (*ilavantikai*)¹ lined by beautiful trees thickly covered with several sorts of flowers, which were offered along with lovely Spring and the Hill-breeze as a tribute to the (Cōla) king by the bodiless God (Kāma).

Proceeding further still, they crossed the broad road rendered cool by the low branches of trees on either side which led to a bathing place on the *Kāvēri*, and going westwards they penetrated to the distance of a *kātam* into the flowery grove on the northern bank of the river celebrated for its freshes, until they reached the residence of the saint Kavunti (*Kavuntippaḷi*) which was a grove of flowering trees. There the slender-waisted (Kaṇṇaki) felt fatigued. Her feet were sore (with walking). Breathing hard, she of the

fragrant tresses asked in a lisping voice, displaying her sharp-edged teeth, 'Which is the ancient city of Madura?' Kōvalan smiled a smile of hidden grief and said, 'Girl of the fragrant five-plaited hair, it is over thirty leagues² from our extensive city. It is very near.' Then he visited with his sweet-voiced wife the venerable Kavunti who lived there,³ and both prostrated themselves before her.

1 Ilavantikai was the king's park in which was a lake. Cf. *nirālimanṭapam* used nowadays in connexion with temple festivals. See canto xxv, l. 4, *infra*; also *Maṇi.*, canto ili, ll. 45-6.

2 The distance from Uralyūr to Madura is 30 *kātams*. Feeling that Kāṇṇaki was already wearied, Kōvalan did not tell her outright that it was 30 *kātams*, but said it was six times five leagues so that she would not be alarmed at the long distance!

3 This is referred to as a portion of the Sri-kōll where he lived with the revered Kavunti. It may be noted that the two

forms Kāvunti and Kavunti occur in the text.

The saint looked at them and said 'You have attractive features, noble lineage and highly commendable conduct. You appear to be faultlessly observing *dharma* as laid down in the sacred Jaina scriptures.¹ Why is it that you have left your home and come so far in great distress?'

Kōvalan replied: 'There is not much to say in reply to what you ask, O great saint! I am only eager to go to the ancient city of Madura to make a fortune.' The saint answered, 'If that is so, these tender feet (Kāṇṇaki's) cannot stand the sharp and rough gravel. This fair lady is not fit to go through the jungle. But who knows? Though the journey is not fit for you, you will not abandon it even if I ask you to do so.'² Since I am very anxious to visit flawless Madura in the good Tamil country of the south, there

to worship Arivaṇ by listening to the *dharma* preached by the sinless saints, who have, by their purity, got rid of all their *adharma*, I shall also go with you. Let us go!' Thereupon Kōvalaṇ worshipped the venerable Kavunti with lifted palms and replied 'O saint, if you so favour us, I shall be relieved of my anxiety about this girl with shoulder-bangles.'

Kavunti continued :

'See, O Kōvalaṇ! There are various kinds of troubles to be met in our way (to Madura).³ Listen : If we decide to go through

shady places covered with cool flowers with

1 Kavunti was a Jain and so she speaks the *dharma* of that religion. with a partiality to

2 The implication here is, 'Who knows store for you?'

what Fate has in

3 The forest-route is described as containing snares and pitfalls. The chief produce was jack-fruit; turmeric and ginger also grew there.

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this tender lady who cannot endure the scorching sun, we may, perchance, encounter the dire distress which comes to people who do not avoid the deep and deceitful pits caused by the men who dug out the edible *valli* roots growing underground, and covered over with the faded flowers from the grove of *campaka* trees. If they cautiously avoid these fallen flowers and walk on, they will knock their heads against fully ripe jack-fruits. If then they go into the luxuriant gardens where the turmeric and ginger plants are grown, they will unwittingly tread upon the hard seeds of jack-fruits lying hidden.

‘O loving husband of the lady with carp-like long eyes, if we decide to go along the fields,¹ this damsel will be frightened by the otters, who drive away the quarrelling carps in ponds fragrant with flowers, and seize in their mouths the long-backed *vālai* fish when they are leaping across the tank where the *malanku* live.²

‘Again, the honey-filled hives canes, will have been dismantled

built (by bees) on sugar-
(by the wind) filling the
drinking-water of the tank encircled by
sugar-canes with honey³ and bees.

It is possible that our lady, in a fit of delusion will take the water in her joined palms and drink it (along with the bees) to quench her insufferable thirst.

‘Again those who pluck out the weeds will have scat-tered the water-lily on the ridges in which multi-tinted beetles⁴ will be lying in a

stupor after having drunk the

1 The second route through the agricultural tracts is suggested. Here were cultivated fields interspersed by ponds.

2 A fish whose head resembled that of a snake.

3 The statement suggests that honey was food forbidden to Jains.

4 Here is the preaching of ahimsā or non-injury carried to its utmost limit.

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honey of the flowers. As you walk along, your feet may unconsciously tread on them.

‘If you decide to walk along the bunds of canals where waters splash you will tread upon multi-spotted crabs and snails, and cause unbearable pain to them.’

‘There is no other route anywhere except through fields and groves. O friend with a tuft of curly hair!

Know these signs and avoid such dangers as you go along in the company of this fair lady.'

Thus saying, the venerable Kavunti took up her sacred begging-bowl and her netted bag suspended from her shoulders.² Holding a peacock's feathers in her hand and praying that the *pañcamantra*³ might be their guide on

the way, Kavunti, unrivalled in the practice of virtue,

accompanied the other two in their journey.

Though Saturn gets angry,⁴ though the (fiery) comet⁵

is visible, though Venus of the bright rays travels towards

the

1 Further emphasis on observing the principle of ahimsa cardinal doctrine of the Jains, though it largely figures in the orthodox religion of the Hindus.

2 The begging-bowl (*kaṭijñai*), the url, and peacocks' fea-

thers are the outfit of the Jaina ascetic. See Nālatiyār, 'Ekaī', 1.

9; Manl., canto vi, l. 93.

3 The pañcamantra; a, śl. ā. u, sã.

The Jains style this

pañcanamaskāram. These symbols represent
Arhat, Siddha,

Ācārya, Upādhyāya, and Sādhu, the first letters
of the Pañcapara-

mēṣṭins. Its counterpart in orthodox religion is
pañcākṣara,

namaśivāya.

4 Evidence of the author's knowledge of
astronomical

science. Saturn grows angry when he lodges
himself in R̥ṣabha,

Mina, and Simha.

5. The Dhūmakētu of Sanskrit literature,

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the south (of the sky),¹ no harm is
rendered to the

Kāveri which has its source in the wind-swept

heights of the

Coorg hills where, to the accompaniment of
raging thunder,
the seasonal clouds pregnant with rain pour
down their

blessings the Kāvēri which dashes along with
such diverse

hill produce to meet the advancing tide of the
wealth-bearing

sea.² But finding her movement arrested by
the barrier

-- the anicut with its doorway—she noisily
leaps beyond it

in the sportive mood natural to her first freshes.
No sound

other than this can be heard. We can hear
there neither

the sound of the bucket,³ not of the water-lift;
neither the

usually loud *pecottah*, nor the palm-leaf
basket used in

irrigation.

In the beautiful forest of lotuses
appearing out of ponds
in regions surrounded by paddy-fields and
sugar-cane
could be heard, just as in a battle-field⁴
where two
monarchs fight, different kinds of sounds
produced by the
water-fowl,⁵ the loud-voiced crane, the
red-footed swan,
the green-footed heron, wild fowl, the water
crow (black
heron), fishes, creeping insects, birds and big
herons.

Wallowing in the mire, in regions left
unploughed,
black buffaloes would come out with their
unwashed hair
and their red eyes, and rub their itching
backs upon the

1 These signs are supposed to forebode
evil by causing

drought.

2 Conch, coral, pearls, etc., are the products of the sea.

3 It is interesting to see here the different methods of irri-

gating fields. Cf. Kaut. Artha., Bk. II, chap. 'Sitādhyakṣa'. See

also Maturaikkāñci, ll. 89-93. Most of these methods still survive

in rural areas.

4

The confused noise of the battle-field is compared to the

different kinds of sounds made by a number of water-birds.

5 Here is a categorical list of water-birds.

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straw granary when it gets loose and releases the grain

stocked within amidst the sheaves of paddy

whose rice-

corn hangs down like fly whisks¹ made of the
fur of the

kavari yak. In those places brawny-armed
labourers and

cultivators would assemble making a motley of
sound.

There was also the sound of (rural) songs²
sung to (new)

tunes by low-caste women in their drunken
moods³ while

they looked through their fish-like large eyes
and uttered

indecent words standing in
playful postures and, threw

mud upon each other, covering up their
broad, bangled

shoulders and breasts with mud, having
removed the

(faded) fragrant flowers from their hair and
replaced them

with paddy-shoots.

There was also the sound of the
benedictory songs
(*ērmaṅkalam*) sung reverently by ploughmen⁴
standing by
their ploughshares and seeming to break open
the ground
which then decorated with garlands made of
paddy-stalks,
luxuriant *aruku*, and water-lilies.

There was also heard the *mukavai* song⁵
sung (by the
field-labourers) when they drove cattle over
the reaped
paddy sheaves to thresh the corn; and
the cheering
applause⁶ of those who heard the
round-shaped-tabor

1

Fly whisks were generally made of the fur of the yak.

2 A description of typical rural life.

3 Low-caste women were addicted to drinking.

They decked

themselves with paddy-shoots in their hair.

4 This refers to the simplicity and sincerity of the ploughmen at their work and points to the dignity of field labour. They knew the advantages of deep ploughing.

5 A kind of song sung by field-labourers on floor of paddy fields. Cf. *Puram.*, st. 371.

the threshing-

6 This is what is called *kaḷavalivaḷttu*. According to the *Tolkappiyam* it is *erkaḷavali* (the song of the plough) different

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smeared with mud played by proud minstrels
who used to
produce clear music by their *kiṇai*.¹

Having heard these sounds in regular
succession along
the banks of the great rivers, the travellers
grew glad in
their hearts and did not feel the fatigue of the
journey.

As they passed along, with success due to
the prowess of
the reigning Cōḷa who owned the chariot
with the tiger-
flag, they saw everywhere the sacrificial
smoke, raised by
Brahmans in the *agnisāla* of their tall
houses² which
closely resembled fog-covered hills, capable
of impregna-
ting even the rain-bearing clouds.³
Going further, they saw ancient and
prosperous vil-
lages of cultivators,⁴ the sons of Dame
Kāverī and her
expansive waters, who were responsible for
the support of
the needy and their dependants, and for the
victory of the
monarch.⁵ They also saw rustic parts
interspersed by
villages where the rising fumes of the ovens,

in which the
sugar-cane⁶ juice was being boiled, spread
far and wide
from pōrkkalavali (a warsong). Cf. Pura,
paṭalam', st. 32.

Veṇpāmālai, 'Vākaip-

1 One of the many rural amusements. They
were minstrels
who sang the praises of Veḷālas to the
accompaniment of the
kiṇai drum.

2 A description of the Brahman residences.

3 Conclusive proof of the fire rite being
practised on an ex-
tensive scale by Brahmans in the early Christian
era in the Tamil
land. It implies the acceptance of the theory that
sacrifices cause
rain, which finds a parallel in the Bhagavat
is said 'Yajñad bhavati Parjanya.'

Gītā (ch. v), where it

4 Different types of villages were encountered.

5 The author realized that agriculture is the king and kingdom.
mainstay of the

6 The manufacture of sugar and jaggery from sugar-cane was a common industry in the rural parts of ancient Tamil India,

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over heaps of stored corn which appeared like dark clouds

resting on mountains. They did not travel more than

one *kātam* each day.

After several days' journey, they reached Srīrangam,¹

where the river (the Kāveri) was hidden by the city. Nearby was the habitation of the

Devas—a spot filled with the fragrance of different independent flowers in the

middle of groves of trees fenced by the bent bamboo.

There appeared one Cāraṇa² who was well known for his great skill in expounding the rules of *dharma*, given to the world by the pre-eminent Perumakan,³ and who was returning from the glittering bright *silātala* of the *puṭṭinappākkam* of Pukār which had been jointly erected by the high-minded householders (*aiyar*)⁴ and where he was in the habit of sitting.

Kavunti who had recognized the approach of this Cāraṇa, fell prostrate with her companions at his feet saying: 'May all our past sins perish.' Though the Cāraṇa who had a knowledge of the past, present and future⁵ knew the reason for their coming there, he did not feel

1 Srirangam, now two miles from the town of Tiruchirapalli.

2 In a note Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar identifies these Cāraṇar with

Samana sages of whom there were eight classes. See Cūṭa- maṇi, p. 36.

3 Perumakan is an epithet for Arhat in the context. The threefold eminence is related to three adisayams which are natural, karmaic and providential.

4 The term aiyar used here is significant. It seems to be used in connexion with people who evoked regard from the masses. Undoubtedly it comes from the term ārya, which has in our opinion no ethnic connotation as scholars would make us believe.

5 Avatijñānam

according to Arumpatavuraiyāciriyaṛ.

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afflicted being a hero who had completely put aside attach-

ment and anger.

He then spoke as follows: 'O Kavuntī

of great and

abundant distinction! You know how
inexorable are the

laws of destiny.¹ They do not cease (from
action) even if

ordered to cease. Nor can its wholesome
effect be wiped

away. They are like the sprouts shooting
forth from

sown seeds. Like the lighted lamp that is
extinguished

in an open plain when the high winds blow,
is life in a

body.

‘The All-Knowing,
the incarnation of *dharma*, He who
has transcended all limits of
understanding, the great

Friend, the great Victor (Jinendra),² the
Accomplisher,³

the Great Person (Bhagavan), the
foundation of all

dharma, the Lord, the All-Righteous,
the, Inner Essence

(of the Āgama), the Pure, the
Ancient-One, the All-

Wise, the Vanquisher of Wrath, the
Dēva, the Blissful

Lord,⁴ the Supreme Being, the Possessor
of all virtues,

the Light that illumines the world above, the
great Truth,

the All-Humble, the great Cāraṇa,⁵ the
Root Cause of

all, the *yōgin*,⁶ the great One, the great
Illumination, the

Dweller in everything,⁷ the great Guru, the
Embodiment

1 Cf. Nālaṭīyār—the whole of 'Paḷaviṇai',
esp. st. 4.

2 They are jñānāvāraṇīyam,
darśanāvāraṇīyam, vēdanīyam,

mōhaniyam, āyūṣyam, nāmam, gōtram, and
antarāyam. See

Aṭiyārkkuṇallār's gloss.

3 Also Kṛtakṛtya (Sans.) The term in the text is sidda.

4 The one who gives liberation to all.
It should be noted

that the term mōkṣa is given as śivagati, literally
the attainment

of the Saiva world.

5 He who could move about at his will.

6 The master of the eight mystic powers.

7 Cf. Maṇi., canto v, l. 71.

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of Nature, Our great God, the
fame, the great King of virtues,¹
One of undiminishing
the All-Prosperous,² the

great God,³ the Self-born,⁴ the four-faced,⁵ the Bestower of the *angas*,⁶ the *Arhat*, the peace-bestowing Saint, the One God, the Possessor of eight qualities,⁷ the indivisible old Substance, the Dweller in the Heaven, the foremost of the *Vēdas*,⁸ and the shining Light that dispels ignorance. None can escape the prison⁹ of this body unless he obtains the illumination of the revealed *Vēda* proclaimed by Him who has the various (above-mentioned) names.'

Hearing these truthful words of the *Carāṇa*, Kavanti, pre-eminent in penance, joined her hands on her head, and said: 'My ears will not open themselves to hear anything other than the words of wisdom revealed by Him who vanquished the Three (Desire, Anger and Delusion). My tongue will not say anything other than the 1008 names¹⁰

1 Also the possessor of all virtues.

2 Sankara.

3 *Īśa*.

4 *Svāyambhuva*.

5 *Caturmukha*.

6 It may be the *anga* portion of the *Vēdic* texts. to the Jains it is *anga-āgama*.

As applied

7 These are anantajñānam, anantadarśanam, anantavīryam, anantasukham, nirnāmam, nirgōtram, nirāyuṣyam and aliyāvi yalpu. See Arumpatavuraiyāsiriyaṛ. For the term enkuṇattāṇ, see Kuraḷ, and commentary of Parimēlaḷakar.

8 The three āgamas, Angāgama, Pūrvāgama, and Bahuśru-tiāgama, are supposed to be the Vēdas of the Jains.

9 The term used is potiyaṛai, literally the 'underground chamber with no opening'. In Maṇi., cantos iii, l. 95; xiii, l. 60; iv, l. 105, it is named pulukkarai.

10 What is called the Sahasranāmas of the Lord. Cf. Maṇi., canto v, ll. 77-9.

of the victor of Kāma. My eyes will not see, though

they seem to see, anything other than the pair of feet of

Him who overcame the Five (senses).¹ My useless body

will not touch the earth except before the holy body of

Him² who has taken upon himself virtue out of His grace.

My two hands will not join together to reverence any one

other than the Knower who expounds *dharma* to *Arhats*.

My crown will not suffer any flower to be placed on it

except the flower-like feet of Him who walked upon

flowers.³ My mind will not permit me to learn by heart

anything other than the sacred words uttered
by the God
of interminable bliss.'

Hearing with approval these words of
praise from her,

the Cāraṇa arose from the *silāvaṭṭam* and
rising to a

height of two spans, blessed Kavuntī
saying, 'May thy

birth-causing bondage cease!'⁴ and as he
went away along

a path in the sky, they worshipped him
saying, 'May our
bondage cease.'

After having stepped into a boat
at the landing-place

of the great river Kāverī where rain-bearing
clouds rested

on the flowery groves, the couple and the
great saint

crossed over to the peerless temples on the
southern bank

where they rested for a while in a flowery
grove full of
fallen flowers.

Just then a trifier passed by their side
in that grove
filled with fragrance, prating useless
love-talk to a newly,

1 A Jitendriya according to the Sanskritists.

2 The idea is that she will not prostrate
herself before any-
body except God.

3 Cf. Kural where the expression *malarmisai
ēkinān* occurs.

We have not been able to trace any legend of the
God walking on
flowers.

4 *Samsārapāśa-bandham*.

found sweetheart.¹ Desiring to know who the couple

(Kōvalan and Kāṇṇaki) were, who looked like Kāma and Ratī, they approached (Kavunti) and said: 'O Saint whose body has been famished by going without food on all fast days,² who are these people who have come with you?' Kavunti replied: 'They are my children. They are human beings.³ Do not approach them.⁴ They are tired on account of their journey.' The newcomers asked in return, 'O wise one, who has known all the *sāstras*, have you ever heard the children of the same parents becoming husband and wife?'

Kāṇṇaki closed her ears when she heard these sarcastic words and shuddered in the presence of her husband. Kavunti imprecated on them a curse of an extraordinary penance: 'Since these two seem to insult my dear one, fair as a flower garland, they shall become old jackals in the thorny forest.' Because this curse was uttered by one who had done penance, Kōvalan and his wife of the fragrant tresses,

soon heard the long howl of the jackals (into which the lovers had been transformed) and trembled. They said, 'Though those who deviate from the path of virtue speak unjust words, still should it not be attributed to their ignorance?'⁵ O Saint, please state when these men who have blundered in your presence will be released from this curse.' The saint replied: 'Those who have descended into a lower order of birth due to lack of knowledge will wander in trouble for twelve months in the

1 Cf. Kuraḷ, 1311; Maṇi., canto x, l. 22.

2 See Maṇi., canto xviii, l. 122;

Civakacintāmaṇi. l. 1547.

3 The statement implies that they were not Kāma and Rati as supposed by them.

4 Implying 'go your own way.'

5 Cf. Kuraḷ, st. 127.

forest-belt outside the Uṛaiyūr fortress-wall; they may afterwards regain their original forms.'

After their release from the curse had been pronounced, Saint Kavunti, Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki went to the place *vāraṇam* (Uṛaiyūr) so-called because once in that place a fowl, having feathers on its body, had vanquished in war

an elephant (*vāraṇa*) whose ears were as broad as a winnowing fan.¹

Kaṭṭurai

Thus ends the Pukār section describing the descend-ence of the Cōla line which, among the three crowned kings,² shone with their strong arms glittering with bracelets. It speaks of the monarch's virtue, valour³ and high deeds of renown;⁴ of the fame of the ancient city of

Pukar; of the greatness of festival;⁵ of the visit of Devas;⁶ of his subjects who were perpetually happy;⁷ of the abundance of their food;⁸ of the unparalleled glory of their faultless, divine Kāverī,⁹ of the unfailing first freshes due to seasonal rains; of their courts,¹⁰ dances,¹¹ ballads and min-

1 Cf. Kaṭittokai, st. 42; Maṇi., canto xxix, l. 121.

2 The Cēra, the Coḷa, and the Pāṇṭya, the principal kings of the Tamil land.

3 v, ll. 97-8.

4 ibid. vi, l. 14.

5 ibid. v.

6 ibid.; also vi, ll. 72-73.

7 x, ll. 149-50.

8 ibid. ll. 123-4.

9 ibid. ll. 102-109; vii, ll. 2-5; ll. 25-7.

10 iii, ll. 99 and 106.

11 iii, l. 16.

strelsies;¹ of their dramatic representations of *bārata-virutti*,² of erotic compositions relating to *aintiṇai*, and other analogous compositions;³ of the tunes of their musical instruments (*yāl*) of the fourteen *sakōṭāms*;⁴ of the *iṭanilaippālai*;⁵ of their songs the *tārattākkam*⁶ and the four *pans*; of the noises of the city-chariot;⁷ and of the lustrous *pāṇi*;⁸ all these and many more redounding to the unique glory of the king.

VENPĀ

Like the sun that rises in the morning and the moon that appears in the evening, may far-famed Pukar which forms the garland of the sea-girt earth, live for ever.⁹

1 viii, ll. 74-108.

2 vi, ll. 39-63.

3 vi, ll. 17-23.

4 iii, l. 88.

5 iii, l. 70.

6 viii, ll. 35 and 44.

7 v, ll. 38-40.

8 iii, l. 135 and x, l. 131.

9 The idea is 'let Pukār last as long as
endure.'

the sun and moon

II. MATURAIK KANTAM

KATUKAN KATAI

OR

THE SIGHT OF THE FOREST

UNDERNEATH the thick shade of the
asōka tree with
its hanging flowers, the woman ascetic
(Kavunti) wor-
shippad the first God Arivan¹, more radiant
than the rising
sun, under three umbrellas arranged like
three moons
placed one above the other, and graciously
spoke the
good and wise words uttered by the Cāraṇar,
to all the
sages of the *kantaṇpaḷḷi*,² in the extensive
grove adjoining
Araṇkam.³

After spending that day at their residence
and wishing
to go in a southerly direction, Kavunti,
Kōvalaṇ and

Kaṇṇaki left Varāṇam (Uṛaiyūr) before day-break, and when the sun began to illumine the eastern sky, they reached a beautiful *naṇṭapam* situated in the midst of a grove of young trees in a fertile spot containing a tank.

1 The Nāyaṇār enshrined in the temple at Uṛaiyūr. This was a Jain temple. The expression *ādīyirōṭṭam* may mean 'the god with no beginning or end' or 'a very ancient god.'

2 This may refer to Uṛaiyūr Kantaṇpaḷḷi, the sacred hall of the Nirgranthas. Or it may refer to a shrine sacred to Kandaṇ or Subrahmaṇya.

3 Sīrangam was then known as Araṅkam and later as Tir-uvaraṅkam. It is situated two miles from Trichinopoly.

There they met a venerable Brahmana who praised the

Pāṇṭyan of unblemished repute thus: 'May our great king live for ever, protecting this world from aeon to aeon! Long live the Tennavan, the ruler of the southern region, who added to it¹ the Ganges and the Himalayan regions in the north, who once showed his prowess to the other kings by standing on the shore of the sea and throwing his spear upon the fierce waters which, in a spirit of revenge, consumed the river Pahruli² and the Kumari with their adjoining groups of hills.

'Long live he who wore on his shining breast the bright garland of Indra, adding glory to the lunar race! Long live our king who, when thunder-clouds withheld abundant showers, smote the bracelet³ set in the crown of Indra, and imprisoned the clouds, so that there might be great prosperity from an unfailing harvest of crops.'

1 This is a reference to the Pāṇṭyan Invasion of North India, thus corroborating the tradition that the three prominent kings of the south went on a conquering mission as far as the Himalayas. In the south itself the Pāṇṭyan wrested Muttūrkkūṟam from the Cōḷa and Kuṇṭūrkkūṟam from the Cēra (see Aṭṭiyārkkunallār's commentary).

2 See Puṟam., st. 9. A river Parali seems to exist even now (see The Travancore State Manual, Vol. I, p. 240 n.). Here is a legendary description of the sea eroding the land. Kumarikkōṭu may refer to the river or to the hills of Kumari. It is better to take it as a reference to the river, since a river of that name is mentioned in the Brahmāṇṭa Purāṇa.

This legend and the following are attributed to Ukra Pāṇṭyan, in the Tiruvīḷaiyāṭal Purāṇam. The king is said to have stemmed the tide of the sea by throwing his spear on the rising waves. (See Kaṭalsuvara vēḷerinta Tiruvīḷaiyāṭal, No. 21, pp. 80-1, 2nd ed., by Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar.)

3 Ibid., Inṭiran mutimēḷ vaḷalerinta paṭalam. The reference is to king Ukra Pāṇṭyan.

KATUKAN KATAI

Thereupon Kōvalan asked, 'Where is

your native

home? What brings you here?

The Brahmana of undiminishing distinction replied as follows:

‘I am a native of Māṅkāṭu¹ in the region of Kuṭa-

malai (the western hills). I came to satisfy my heart's desire, to see with my own eyes the glory of Viṣṇu, whom many worship with prayer as He reposes with Lakṣmī in His breast, on the couch of the thousand-hooded Serpent, in the temple in Turutti² jutting out on the widening waves of the Kāvīri, even as the blue clouds repose supine on the slopes of the lofty golden mountain (Māru). (I also came to see) the beauty of the red-eyed Lord, holding in His beautiful lotus-hands the discus which is death to His enemies, and also the milk-white conch: (to see Him) wearing a garland of tender flowers on His breast, and draped in golden flowers; and dwelling on the topmost crest of the tall and lofty hill named Vēṅkaṭam,³ with innumerable waterfalls, standing like a cloud in its natural hue, adorned with a rainbow and attired with lightning, in the midst of a place both sides of which are illumined by the spreading rays of the sun and

the moon.

‘Since I saw to the delight of my eyes, the glory and the greatness of the Pāṇṭyan kingdom,⁴ I stayed here blessing the king. This is the reason of my coming here.’

1 Also known as Māṅkal.

2 The term *turuttī* denotes an islet in general. To venture a conjecture the place under reference may be Srīrangam lying between the Kāvērī and the Coleroon.

3 The modern Tirupati Hill. See canto vi, l. 30 above. It is still famous for the number of its waterfalls.

4 It is worth noting that the poet stresses the glory of the Pāṇṭyan through the mouth of a Brahmana who does not belong

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ĪLAPPATIKARAI

Having heard this from the Brahmana who had

performed the Vēdic sacrifices, Kōvalan said, ‘O first

among Brahmanas! Pray tell us the best route to

Madura.’

The Brahmana replied: ‘You have come with your

lady in the season when jungle and mountain tracts have

given up their natural appearance and taken the form of

a desert, losing their smooth surfaces, thus causing deep

distress, since King Sun, along with his minister Spring, by reason of his fierce heat, has diminished his essential quality and lost his beneficence, like a great kingdom whose

monarch has deviated from the path of right policy under

the influence of an unrighteous councillor.¹

‘If, in this long journey, you “swim” across rocks,

hillocks (*porai*),² illusory places and the bunds of lakes full

of water, and reach Koṭumbai³ by the bund of a great

to his kingdom. The greatness of the kingdom is to be contrasted with the injustice meted out to Kōvalan later by the king, and the consequent bending of the rod of justice. It must be noted also

that the age-long righteous sceptre only bent and did not break. For did not Kaṇṇakī herself claim to be the king's daughter and inform us of his innocence? (See 'Vāḷttukkāṭai', xxix, p. 577).

1 Here the author of the epic wants to convey to the reader,

by comparison and contrast, the impressions of unrighteous rule

and the consequent prevalence of anarchy in the land.

2 Also known as pottaimalai.

3 Koṭumpāḷūr containing a tank Neṭuṅkuḷam. It was the

capital from which the Vēḷir line of kings ruled. The present town Koṭumpāḷūr in Pudukkottai State contains a large number of inscriptions forming excellent historical material for reconstructing the history of the Vēḷir line. One of the inscriptions supplies the genealogy of this ruling family. Thus the Koṭumpai of the Cilappatikāram played an important part in the early and medieval history of South India. According to the Periyapurāṇam, Iṭai-

lake, you will come to a spot which looks like the devouring trident¹ wielded by the God

whose tuft is adorned with a crescent.

‘If you decide to take the route lying to the right and pass by the *kaṭampa* tree with outspread branches, the dried *ōmai* tree, the *vākai* with its cloven stem, the withered bamboo, the equally withered *maral* dark with fissures, jungles where thirsty deer roam about vainly in search of water, and the haunts of the Eiy_{nar},² you will come across the celebrated Sirumalai³ of the Pāṇṭyan covered on all sides with plants of wild rice, ripe sugar-cane, full-grown millets, *ragi* that grows on rich soil, garlic, saffron, beautiful *kavalai* creepers, plantains, arecas, coconuts growing in bunches, mangoes and jack tree. Keep that hill on your right and reach Madura.

‘If you do not take that route, but choose the route to the left, you will hear winged beetles singing the tune of *sevvaḷi*,⁴ in the low-lying fields, in glades with cool flowers, and in jungles, primarily desert regions. Passing

these you reach Tirumalkunram,⁵ that opens into a cave which kaḷi Nāyaṇār, one of the sixty-three Śaiva saints, had Koṭumpāḷūr for his capital. (See Chronological List of Inscriptions of the Pudukkottai State, 1929, Nos. 14, 33, 82, etc.; An. Rep. Ep., 1907-8, paras. 87-9.)

1 This indicates that from that spot branched off three routes as explained in the text below.

2 See Dikshitar's article 'Elyṇār' in Sentamil, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, for other details.

3 Literally, the little hill. This hill exists today bearing the same name and is noted for its sweet plantains.

4 Sevvall is a primary melody-type of the Mullai region. Cf. Puṇam., st. 144.

5 Tirumalkunram (literally, the hill sacred to Viṣṇu) is the name of a hill near Madura, known as

Tirumālaland Tirumālḷṛum-

removes all delusion, and leads to the miraculous three ponds, greatly praised by the gods, and called the sacred Śaravaṇam,¹ Bava-kāraṇi and Iṭṭasiddi,² ever renowned. If you bathe in the sacred Śaravaṇam, you will gain knowledge of the book attributed to the king of the gods (*Aindra-Vyākaraṇam*);³ if you bathe in the Bava-kāraṇi, you will learn the deeds of your past which led to your present birth; if, on the other hand, you bathe in the Iṭṭasiddi pond, you will gain all that you wish for.

‘If you choose to enter that cave,
 worship then the
 great Lord on that very lofty hill,
 meditating on His
 colai, isung of by most of the Ālvārs. See
 also Paripāṭal, st. 15.

According to this authority this place was noted for the worship of Vāsudēva and Balarāma. It is not clear when the cult of Balarāma became extinct here or in the Tamil land generally. Today this shrine is known as the Aḷakarmalai. It seems that Aḷakar may be a representation of the form of Balarāma, and not necessarily of Kṛiṣṇa. Sundararājan is the Sanskrit rendering of the term Aḷakar.

1 This and the two following are the names of tanks, what we now call Puṣkarani, to bathe in which was supposed to purify.

The Sanskrit Purāṇas are full of such lakes noted for their miraculous properties.

2 Sanskrit Iṣṭasiddhi.

3 A grammatical treatise by name Viṇṇavarkomāṇ Viḷunūl attributed to Indra. The reference in

the Cilappatikāram is possibly to the Aindra-Vyākaraṇam, the oldest school of Sanskrit grammarians, known to and quoted by Pāṇini and others. It is

mentioned in Buddhist Canonical works like the (C. Lassen, I. A. K., Vol. II, 2nd ed., p. 477);

Avadānaśataka

cf. Tārānātha's

History of Indian Buddhism (Schlefer's trans., p. 54). That

this grammar was known to

Tolkāppiyāṇār is evident from the preface to the Tolkāppiyam.

On this subject there is an excellent

monograph by A. C. Burnell entitled On the School of Sanskrit Grammarians, 1875.

lotus-feet and going thrice round the hill;
there, on the broad banks of the Cilambāru¹

cutting its way through the soil, will appear at the flower-strewn base of the blossoming *kōnku* tree, a nymph² fair as a golden creeper, as striking as lightning with cloud-like locks of dark hair, and with serrated bracelets on her shoulders, saying: "Tell me what constitutes the happiness of this birth,³ the happiness of the next⁴ and also eternal happiness⁵ which results neither in birth nor rebirth. I live on this mountain and my name is Varōttamā. To them who answer these questions I am bound in service. So, good people, if

1 Also known as the Nūpura-Gangā We have, similarly, Ākāśa-Gangā, Pātāla-Gangā, etc.

2 The reference is to a Yakṣiṇī. From the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki we are led to infer that the Yakṣas were one of the South Indian tribes contemporaneous with the epoch of Rāvaṇa and Vāli. The Yakṣas were the ruling tribe in Ceylon in the fifth century B.C. when Vijaya landed there. But they had practically become extinct by the commencement of the Christian era though a few lingered here and

there in forest regions. See Dikshitar's paper 'South India in the Rāmāyaṇa' in the Proceedings of the Seventh Oriental Conference 1933, p. 243 ff.

3 Poruḷ (Sans., artha) or wealth is said to constitute one's happiness in this birth. The idea is that a man of no wealth will always feel miserable. See the Mānavadharmasāstra, ch. 2, st. 224: Cāṇakya Rāja Niti Sāstra, canto iv, st. 21: also, Tlrukkōval, st. 332.

4 Good and righteous deeds on earth contribute to happiness after death. The fruits of actions in this birth are judged and rewarded only in the next birth. This is, in other words, the theory of pre-ordained fate.

5 Salvation or freedom from the bondage of saṃsāra or worldly life is said to be the highest of the Puruṣārthas. Cf. Kuraḷvenpā, 233; Puṇam., st. 50. See also Dikshitar, Hindu Administrative Institutions, p. 37.

you give the right answer, I shall open the door (leading to this cave). On opening the door several passages with entrances will be revealed, and beyond them a gateway with double doors. Beyond that, a creeper-like lady resembling a picture¹ will again appear before you asking, 'What is eternal bliss?'² If you reply, you will obtain one of three desired things.³ But if you are not able to answer, I shall not harm you. You can go on your long journey; I shall help you.'

'If people answer her questions she will show them the three ponds mentioned above, and retire. If you bathe therein, desirous and uttering any one of these things, meditating upon and uttering with equal reverence the two great Vedic mantras of five letters⁴ and eight letters⁵ you will achieve results which cannot be realized even by the hardest of penances

'If you do not desire these benefits, meditate on the lotus-feet of the Lord standing on that hill. If you so meditate, there will appear His lofty Eagle standard. By

1 The word vaṭṭikai in the text means a picture or portrait.

2 Mōkṣa is the term for this in Sanskrit literature.

3 The reference is to muppāl or trivarga of Sanskrit literature.

4 The significance of the Pañcākṣara mantra Namaḥivaya is brought out here. Constant meditation on it is said to rid one of all ills. Even today many orthodox Hindus are initiated by their

gurus and continue meditating on this great mantra sacred to

Siva.

5 This is the Aṣṭākṣara 'Ōm namonārāyaṇāya'. This statement is significant in as much as it proves that the spirit of sectarianism was still non-existent. For, while the Pañcākṣara is sacred to Siva, the Aṣṭākṣara is sacred to Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu. It is said that the two mantras must be uttered with equal reverence. Belief in the efficacy of such mantras is still current.

KATUKAN KATAI

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its mere sight and by meditation on His

lotus-feet there

will be no more rebirth. Rejoicing in
that thought go

to Madura of traditional glory. Such is the
sight worth seeing in that cave.

'If you reject these routes, there is the
straight path

that lies midway between them with pleasant
villages and

groves and several jungles therein. Beyond
these dwells

a terrific deity who appears to travellers,
not causing

fear but treating them with civility and
causing no

harm. If you escape this, the path to
Madura will of

itself be known to you. So depart and I
shall go (to

sacred places) to worship the feet of
the Lord who

measured the whole universe.'¹

After listening to the Brahmana's
account of the routes,
the saint Kavunti made a categorical reply :
'O Brahmana
versed in the four Vēdas and engaged in
doing good!
We have no wish to go to the cave. The
literature given
by Indra, who lives longer than the Dēvas,
can be found
in our holy scriptures.² If you wish to
know of deeds
done in the past, do you not look for them
in the present
birth? Is there anything that cannot be
gained by those
who lead a life of truthfulness and
non-injury?'³ Go your
way seeking the feet of the God sacred to
you. We go
the way suited to us.' After speaking
words befitting the
occasion to that Brahmana, she spent

that day in a
resting-place along with Kōvalan who never
swerved from
his principles.

1 The reference is to the Trivikrama
Avatār of Viṣṇu.

2 The Aindra-Vyākaraṇam, according to
tradition, belongs
to the Paramāgamas of the Jains.

3 The chief Jaina doctrines.
Here we may note Kavunti's
reply to the Brahmana who quoted his scriptures.
In meeting all
his three points she seems to imply that the Jaina
scriptures con- tain these and more.

Then they resumed their journey.

One day, the sage

Kavunti and the lady of the long dark eyes rested them-

selves on the way owing to fatigue. From that place

frequented (by people), an adjoining pathway branched

off, which Kōvalan took and reached a lake and stood on

its great bank to slake his thirst.

Then the forest-deity¹ passion-lorn and hoping that he might fall in love with

her, appeared before him in the form of Vasantamālā.

Like a trembling creeper she fell at his feet and shed false

tears saying, 'Mātavi told me, "I am not guilty of what I wrote on the fragrant garland. You must have told

Kōvalan some falsehood, which made him harsh towards

me." Saying this, she fell in a faint
overcome by grief,

but (recovering) said, "The worst of all
careers is that of

a courtesan, shunned like a disease by
pious and learned

men who avert their faces, and by people
who can distin-

guish right from wrong."² In this
way she burst into

tears which dropped like pearls from
her cool eyes, and

with her hands she wrenched her string of
lustrous white

pearls and scattered them. Forsaken by
her, and hearing

the news from travellers on their way
from the ancient

city of Madura, I have come in great
distress along with

a caravan.³

Generous man, what relief can you give me?'

1 Belief in forest-deities was very

usual. They were

supposed to assume any form. For instance,
the deity that app-

peared before Kōvalan assumed the guise of
Vasantamālā, the maid

in attendance on the courtesan Mātavi.

2 See Mañi., canto xxiv, l. 79.

The author ridicules the life

of the courtesan by making Mātavi herself condemn it.

Accord-

ing to him any decent and self-respecting man
looks upon a pro-

stitute as the embodiment of disease.

3 The word śatta (Sans, sārtha) is a
reference to the caravan

trade carried on in those days between one part
of the country -

and the other by groups of merchants.

Having been appraised by the
distinguished Brahmana
that in that dreadful forest there was a
luring deity,
Kōvalan decided to employ the mantra to
disillusion him-
self about the identity of that lady. The mantra
he uttered
was the mantra¹ sacred to the goddess riding
on the deer,²
so that the deity went away confessing,³ 'I
that deluded
you am a spirit of the forest. Pray do not
tell of this
misdeed of mine to your wife, lovely as a
peacock, or to
the holy sage, but go your way.'
Carrying water in a lotus-leaf⁴ to
the weary women
he relieved them of their distressing thirst.
Finding that
it was not possible to proceed farther in that

desert-region

as the rays of the sun ascending the heavens increased in

heat, Kōvalan, Kaṇṇaki of the curved ear-rings, and the

saint, came upon a flowery grove of the *kurava*, *kadamba*,

kōṇku and *vēṅkai*, closely intertwined with one another.

There they entered the shrine of Aiyai-kumari⁵ who dwells

1 Another instance of faith and belief in the efficacy of mantras.

2 This goddess is known by other names such as Antari,

Śakti, or Āiykalaippāvai. Kōvalan shows here that he was a

Śakti-upāsaka, or a devout worshipper of the goddess as Śakti.

For a history of the cult see R. G. Bhandarkar, op. cit., pp.

3 Here is the deity's confession of guilt. She could not withstand the efficacy of a Vēdic mantra.

4 This shows that Kōvala_n and Kaṇṇaki did not even take a drinking vessel with them.

5 The deity worshipped by the Vaṭuvar or the Maṇavar.

She is known by different names. Cf. Matsya Purāṇa, chap. 154,

st. 73-83, where the Creator addresses Vibhāvārī the night-deity.

In the Hariyamba there is a hymn to Āpya (Durgā) in which she

is represented as the goddess of Śabarās, Pulindās, Barbaras, and

other wild tribes, and as fond of wine and flesh. See R. G. Bhan-

in heaven, whose eye was in Her forehead and who was worshipped by the gods. From those hardy bow-men whose lands were unvisited by rains, and whose bows were therefore their ploughs, and who deprived passers-by of their belongings, she expected sacrificial offerings in return for Her blessing them with victory when, as if guided by Yama, they invaded the neighbouring territory with their cruel bows.

darkar, op. cit., p. 143.

Aiyalkoṭṭam was the name of the temple where Korraival or the Goddess of Victory was enshrined. She is

known as Kālī or Mahākālī in Sanskrit literature, and we thus see a marvellous blending of two ancient cultures, evolving what is known as the Śakti cult.

CANTO XII

VETTUVA VARI

OR

THE HUNTERS' SONG -

THE sun continued to spread his cruel, fierce rays and made it impossible (for the travellers) to go on their journey. She of the fragrant locks of hair (Kannaki) breathed hard, and her tender feet were red with blisters: so they rested in an unfrequented place in the temple of Aiyai.¹

Later, Cālīni,² born in the family of the Maravar who ever had bows in their hands, began her dance with appropriate gestures and became possessed with divinity, her hair standing on end, and her hands

raised aloft; she

continued to dance moving from one place to another to the wonderment of the foresters, in the *manram*, the common eating-place³ of the *Eiynar*⁴ situated in the midst

1 From the earliest times *Aiyai* or *Korravai* has been the

favourite deity of hunters in South India. The goddess was wor-

shipped as the Goddess of Victory. Her temple was located in a

manram in the middle of the village. A *manram* was a common

meeting-place for village folk, answering to the public hall of a town today.

2 A woman Possessed with divinity. Generally, an old lady

of the family of hunters who considered herself inspired and

spoke out as if she were herself a goddess.

3 This points to the custom among the *Maravar* of eating

from a common table.

4 The expression in the text for this is
ur-naṭu-maṇṇam,

This implies that there were other maṇṇams also,

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of the village, encircled by a thorny
fence. She then proclaimed aloud their
unfulfilled vows thus :

'The cattle-herds of the
towns of your enemies are

flourishing : the common places (*maṇṇam*)
of the strong-

bowed Eiynar are lying empty : the Eiynar of
the Maṇavar

tribe have become meek like persons
observing *dharma*,

and no more rob the wealth of passers-by.
Unless you

render¹ what is due to the goddess riding
on 'the stag,'²

She will not send victory to attend your bows, O ye that

live by robbery!³ If you desire to live merrily drinking

toddy, render your dues.⁷

From among the ancient family of the Eiy_nar, who

preferred offering their own heads in sacrifice to crema-

tion⁴ (after dying a natural death), a virgin⁵ was chosen

1 The Maravar generally made a vow to their goddess just

before an expedition to celebrate their hoped-for victory by a sacrificial offering.

2 Kalittokai, st. 39, ll. 12-14.

3 The Maravar were addicted to drinking toddy, and their only occupation was highway robbery.

4 It is remarkable to note that the method of disposal of the

dead among this primitive tribe was cremation and

not burial. It

has been assumed by certain scholars that burial was a custom of

the pre-Aryam tribes, and cremation was a later introduction.

This statement of Iṭankō-Aṭikaḷ, who lived nearly one thousand

eight hundred years before our time, is entitled to respect, and

judged by this, it seems that both cremation and burial were as

much the institutions of the Aryans as of the pre-Aryans. Both

have been prevalent from prehistoric times, and it is impossible

to decide which institution is the older.

5 Here we are introduced to the actual method of worship

in vogue among these primitive tribes. It was usual to select a

virgin from among their community and make her appear like the

godless installed in the shrine. This virgin was taken in proces-

sion to the temple of their guardian-deity and worshipped in front

to represent the goddess. Her short hair was dressed in the form of a *jaṭa* (the coiffure of Śiva), and ornamented with a small silver snake and a crescent-like semicircular tooth from wild hog which had destroyed tender plants in well-guarded fields. Her *tāli* was a necklace made of white teeth plucked from a strong-limbed tiger,¹ and her girdle was a cleaned tiger-skin with mingled spots and stripes on its outer surface. The bow in her hand was of heart-wood. She was mounted upon a stag with twisted horns. The Eiyṇar ladies, who feted her with offerings of dolls, parrots, wild fowls of soft feathers, blue peacocks, balls (*pandu*) and *kaḷaṅku*, followed her carrying paints, powders, cool and fragrant pastes, boiled grains, sweets of gingili seeds,

rice with meat, flowers, frankincense, and fragrant scents, when she was taken before the shrine of Ananku who accepts sacrificial offerings in return for victory. This was accompanied by the beating of the drum used during highway robbery, and the blowing of the trumpet, generally heard when looting, the horn and the pipe, and the ringing of the loud bell, simultaneously. There she worshipped Her with the stag for Her mount, and became inspired. Pointing to Kaṇṇaki, of the fragrant locks of hair, standing with weary little feet by

of the shrine, where the goddess was said to appear and approve what the damsel spoke. The commentator Aṭiyārkunallār is not clear here. He seems to take the virgin to be the idol enshrined in the temple itself. This cannot be accepted in the light of 11. 72-3 where it is expressly stated that the Kumari in the shrine blessed the Kumari of the Eiyṇar.

1 The Elynar decked their goddess with ornaments and clothes peculiar to their mores. For instance, a tiger-skin and an elephant-skin formed the clothing of their goddess. Similarly the teeth of the tiger formed her garland. From the description given it is to be understood that their virgin goddess becomes later on the consort of the God Śiva and assumes all His paraphernalia.

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the side of her husband, she spake as follows :¹ 'This is the lady of the Koṅkunāṭu, the mistress of the Kuṭa-malai (the western hills), the queen of the south Tamil country, and the sprout of her (Kaṇṇaki's) prior penance; she is *tirumāmaṇi* (literally, the bright jewel) far-famed as

the peerless gem of the world.'²

At this Kaṇṇaki smiled a derisive smile and stood

modestly behind the broad back of her dear husband

thinking that this soothsayer spoke in ignorance.

Just then, She who wore the moon in Her coiffure,

who had an unwinking eye in Her forehead, coral lips,

white teeth, a throat darkened by poison,³ who had the

serpent Vāsuki of unquenchable ire for Her girdle, and

mount Mēru for Her shoulder-bangles, whose breasts were

enclosed within a bodice resembling a serpent's venomous

teeth, and who wore elephant hide for Her upper garment

and a lion's (tiger's?) skin for Her

petticoat, (appeared),

with a trident in Her bangled hands.

Her left foot was

adorned with *cilampu* and the right with a
victorious anklet.

Skilled in sword-fighting, the Lady who
stood on the head

1 The inspired Cālīṇi could read

the future and therefore

foretold what Kaṇṇaki was to become.

Neither Kaṇṇaki nor her

party realized the implications

of these statements and Kaṇṇaki

showed that she had no faith in such reports.

2 A note may be made of the significant terms

orumāmaṇi,

and *tirumāmaṇi* attributed to Kaṇṇaki by

the inspired Cālīṇi. It

is not possible to get at the implications

of these terms, but it is

a remarkable coincidence that the

Narriṇai, another Caṅkam

classic, refers to the incident of Kaṇṇaki's casting off one of her breasts and uses the expression *tirumāmaṇi*. Perhaps it was the title given to Kaṇṇaki after she was installed as the Goddess of Chastity. This reference is enough to show that the Narriṇai belongs to the post-Cilappatikāram epoch.

3 Sans., Nilakaṇṭhi,

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of the double-bodied broad-shouldered

Asura,¹ the god-

dess worshipped by many, Kumari, Kavuri

(Sans., Gaurī),²

Samari (Sans., Samhārī or the slayer), the

holder of the

trident, She whose hue is blue, the

younger sister of

Viṣṇu³ the giver of victory, the holder of

the cruel axe,

Durgā,⁴ Lakṣhmī, Sarasvatī,⁵ the image

adorned with rare

gems, the ever-youthful Kumari whom

Vīṣṇu and
Brahmā came to worship, declared the form
and attire of
the divinity-possessed Kumari quite god-like.

URAIPPĀṬṬUMATAI

(The glory of the courtyard)⁶

In front of the sacrificial altar of the
Goddess who sits
by the side of the three-eyed God, the
nākam and the
sweet *naraṇtai* flowered luxuriantly;
everywhere the *āccā*

1 The deity is named Mahiṣāsuramardani. The Story of the Dēvi who destroyed the demon in the shape of a buffalo is found in almost all the Purāṇas.

2 For an interpretation of the term
article 'Umāgauri' in the Kalaimagal, Vol.

Gauri, see Dikshitar's
III, p. 227 ff.

3 According to literary tradition, as embodied in legends, Durgā is the sister of Viṣṇu. According to the Harivamśa the Dēvī was born to Yaśodā, and when she was dashed against a stone, she attained heaven. Hence she is said to be a sister of Vasudēva—Kṛṣṇa.

4 Durgā described as Śiva-Śakti.

5 It is remarkable to find a total absence of sectarianism in the Cilappatikāram. Kumari is addressed as Durgā who rode a stag, as Lakṣmī (Paimtoṭippāvai) and as Sarasvatī (the deity sacred to learning), the respective consorts of the Hindu triad, Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā.

6 These three stanzas are addressed to the glory of the courtyard of the shrine dedicated to Aiyaī. It was adorned by a grove of trees bearing flowers of different hues and fragrance.

tree and the sandal rose high: also
the *se* tree and the mango were thick with foliage.

In front of the shrine of Her who wears the crescent in Her coiffure, the *vēṅkai* tree shed its golden flowers: numerous were the branches of the excellent *ilava* (cotton) tree. The *puṅka* let fall its white petals.

In front of the shrine of the younger sister of Viṣṇu, blossomed the *kadamba* tree, the *pātiri*, *puṇṇai*, odorous *kuravu*, and *kōṇiku*; and on their branches swarms of bees hummed as if playing upon the *yāl*,

Again,¹

(The Kurava girl said) 'O, how wonderful is the pen-
ance of this damsel of golden ornaments who stands here
assuming the form and adornment of the Goddess of
Victory! The only family worthy of mention is that of
the hunter-archers,² in which this damsel of golden bangles
was born.

'O, how wonderful is the
penance of this damsel with
a waist like the hood of a cobra,³ who now
stands adorned

1 The editor of the text informs us that, according to some manuscripts, this and the following two stanzas are in the praise of Cālīni engaged in dancing.

2 We get further light on the customs and manners of the

Maṇavar. They were great hunters and archers. If we compare their mode of living with the elaborate and luxurious life said to have been led both by town folk and village folk in other parts of the book, we have only to infer that persistence is writ large in the cultural development of the ancient Tamils. Their primitive occupations have been continued down to historical times.

3 The word alkul which occurs frequently in Tamil classics is very difficult to translate. It seems to stand for that part of the abdomen below the navel.

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with the decoration of Aiyai!

mention is that family of the

The only family worthy of

Eiynar who used to shoot

their arrows, in which she was born.

‘O, how wonderful is the penance of

this damsel of lovely bangles who stands with the trappings of Her who rides fast upon the stag! The only family worthy of mention is that family of the Elynar with bamboo bows, in which this damsel of lovely bangles was born.'

Again,

‘How is it that you, who
gods and stand undaunted as

receive the worship of all
the sprouting wisdom in
the Vēda of all Vēdas, once stood upon the
dark head of
the wild buffalo, clad in a tiger's skin and
self with an elephant's skin?

covering your-

‘How is it that you who stand as the shining light spreading its rays over the lotus-heart of Hari, Hara and Brahmā, also stood upon the stag with the dark-twisted

horns, after slaying Mahiṣāsura, holding your sword in your bangled hands?

‘How is it that you who stand praised by the Vēdas as the consort of Him who has an eye in His forehead and the Ganges in His coiffure, stood upon a fierce red-eyed lion,¹ holding a conch and discus in your lotus-hands?’

1 The lion is the steed of Durgā.

Legend has it that Vibhā-vari, the Goddess of Night, entered into Umā's body at the order of the Creator. After Umā's marriage with Śiva, Vibhāvari was ordered to leave Umā's body and reside in the Vindhya hills. Here the Dēvi was given a lion to ride.

See Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 157. Treatises on architecture in Sanskrit and the evidence of sculpture testify that the lion was invariably the steed of this goddess as was the stag also. It is but natural that a daughter of

G—21

There,¹

With a garland made of the *konrai* flower and with a shoulder-garment of basil leaves, this damsel in the form of Kumari, began dancing to the delight of the *Dēvas*, and to the distress of the *Asuras*.

‘Again,

Sword in hand, and to the repeated tinkling of her metal-filled anklet, her bracelet, and her waist-band all of gold, our Goddess danced the *marakkāl*¹ to vanquish the deceitful *Asuras* who also bore swords. If She, sword in hand, could perform that dance on the *marakkāl*² to vanquish the deceitful *Asuras*, who also bore swords, the

gods would praise Her of the hue of *kāya*,
and shower
flowers on Her with their hands.

At the time when an unrivalled and
fierce warrior of a small village sets out to seize
the enemy's cattle,³ and
is desirous of wearing the *veṭci* garland,⁴ he
invokes the

the Great Mountain thick with forests, should have
the stag or the lion as her favourite animal.

1 What follows is the dance of victory by
Durgā.

2 Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar explains thus:
'When the Asuras
sent illusory reptiles and scorpions over Her, 'Durgā
with wooden
legs danced with a spear in Her hand.' This is
called the
marakkāl dance of Durgā.

3 Karantai is a theme for recovering a
herd of cattle captured by the enemy and is regarded
as a declaration of war.

Karantaiyar are those warriors who rescue the

cattle seized by the enemy. See Tamil Lexicon, p. 743. Here we have to note that cattle-lifting was one of the causes of ancient Tamil warfare.

4 Cf. Pura, venpāmālai, 'Veṭci', st. 3, where cattle-lifting is under reference. The veṭci garland was a symbolical representation of success over an enemy.

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aid of the Goddess who slays with Her shining sword. O if he should desire to wear the *veṭci* garland and invoke the aid of Her who slays with the bright sword, the king-crow¹ of the forest will send forth its ominous note in the enemy's village.

When the female vendor of toddy² refuses to serve the angry Maravaṇ, he will draw his bow, and observing the good omen of birds, start out in search of the enemy's cattle.

And at the time when he goes out in search of the enemy's cattle, observing the omen of birds, the Goddess of Victory will raise Her lion-standard and march in front of his bow.³

Again,

‘O young maid with lovely teeth,
behold! The great
herds of cattle, which your elders brought
by capture in
former times, have filled the courtyards of
the blacksmiths,⁴
drummers, and celebrated bards who play on
the *yāl*.

1 The crying of the king-crow is a bad omen. This points to the custom of foretelling future events from the actions of birds. It may be remembered that in ancient Rome there was an augur—a religious official who foretold future events by omens

taken from the actions of birds. Such
superstitious beliefs were
common in the ancient world.

2 The implication is that the Eiy_nar has
failed to pay his
old dues owing to poverty, because of slackness
in his profession
which consisted of looting his neighbours' cattle.

3 The flag of aṭi is appropriate to the
goddess whose steed
was a lion.

4 See Puṛam., st. 312. Distribution of
the captured pro-
perty was made among blacksmiths, sples,
soothsayers, toddy-
sellers, bards and drummers. Special mention
may be made of
the use of sples by the Eiy_nar.

‘O girl with white teeth, behold! The herds
of cattle, captured by your elders to the distress
of their defenders, have filled the courtyards of

the women who sell toddy, of the expert forest spy, and of the soothsayers who interpret bird omens.

‘O girl with eyes smeared with collyrium and like *kāya* flowers, behold! The big herds of cattle seized by your elders causing distress to the enemy's villages, have filled the courtyards of the grey-moustached Eiyṇar of unsympathetic speech, and of their old women’

TURAIPPĀṬṬUMATAI¹

*Again,*²

‘We have worshipped your two feet that graciously relieve the suffering of the Dēvas and the Muṇis who roam in company of the sun. Now accept this blood,³ by cutting our necks, as the price of the victory you confer upon the brave and strong Eiyṇar.

1 Turaippāṭṭu is a verse which illustrates minor themes in Akam and Puṇam.

2 This and the following two stanzas are styled

avippall by the commentator. Here is an allusion to the tradition that sages like the Vāḷakhilyas go with the sun as he moves. See Puram., st. 43, and Tirumurukā., l. 107 and the commentary thereon. See Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 126, st. 28-45; Brahman̄ṭa Purāṇa, ch. 23. It is said that as many as seven gaṇas including gods and sages followed the sun in his course. The other five are the Nāgas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, and Rākṣasas.

3 Also Kurutippall ; see Aṭṭiyārkunallār's gloss.

The idea of a human sacrifice belongs to the primitive neo-lithic peoples, and it would not be far from the truth to consider these hunters to be the descendants of early neolithic inhabitants of South India. See also F. J. Richards's article 'Sidelights on the Dravidian Problem' in the Q.J.M.S.,

Vol. VI, pp. 156-201,

you who are like a blue gem, and who are worshipped by the gods along with their crowned king. Accept the flesh and blood offered to you as the price of the great victory you confer upon the Eiy_nar, in their seizure of herds of cattle.

‘O Kumari! Accept the blood of sacrifice¹ at your altar in fulfilment of the oath made, touching your feet, by the tiger-like Eiy_nar, who sally forth in the dead of night, with *tu_ṣi*, the small *pa_rai*, and the pipe, sounding as if to pierce the sky.’

THE OFFERING OF SACRIFICE²

‘O Śankari, Antari, Nili, who wear in your coiffures

the red-eyed serpent along with the crescent! Accept this

sacrifice from the Eiy_nar with strong bows and arrows,

and in answer to our prayer grant that travellers³ may

come oftener that (by robbing them) we may

increase our
riches.

O you, who blessed the Dēvas, who had
to face death
in spite of having drunk nectar! O you, who
are immortal
even though you drank the poison which can
be drunk by
on one, eat this offering made by us, the
heartless Eiynar,
who enter neighbouring villages when all are
sleeping, and
sound our *tutis* before we plunder them.

1 It is evident that the time of sacrifice
and worship by
these hunters was the dead of night, when the
whole world was
sleeping.

2 The following three stanzas describe the
actual offering of
sacrifice.

3 These hunters pray for the prosperity
of travellers because

they are one source of their livelihood.

‘O you, who blessed all by kicking the rolling wheel sent in disguise by your uncle (Kamsa)¹ and walked through the *maruta* tree,² accept this offering given as your due, by us the ungrateful Eiynar, who know nothing but how to rob people of their wealth and cause³ unhappiness.’

Again,

May the Pāṇṭyan greedy for victory, and the Lord of the lofty, fertile Potiyil hill where dwells the sage next in rank to Brahmā⁴ who gave us the Vedas, wear the *veṭci* flower in his crown leading to the ruin of his enemy's camp and of the defence of their cattle.

1 For a version of this legend see the

Bhagavata Purāṇa, Bk. X, ch. 7, st. 6-7.

Kamsā sent an Asura in the form of a rolling wheel which the baby Kṛṣṇa kicked, and broke to pieces.

2 ibid, ch. 10, st. 23 ff.

The reference is to two Gandharvas who became two arjuna trees by the curse of Nārada. Kṛṣṇa, being a mischievous baby, was one day tied to a mortar by his mother. With that he ran between the two trees, making them

prostrate on the earth. This relieved both the Gandharvas from the curse of the sage. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V. ch. 6, st. 12-17, gives a slightly different version of this incident as also of the breaking of the wheel by Kṛṣṇa.

3 Cf. Kalittokai, st. 15, where this very line occurs as if one is a copy of the other.

4 Agastya was born after Brahma according to Aṭṭiyark-kunallar. But the Arumpatavural says that he was born after Mahēśvara. Naccinārkkiniyar is unable to Maturalkkañci, ll. 40-2, commentary. See

accept this view. See also Matsya Purāṇa

(ch. 61, st. 17 f.), where he is said to have been
pitcher and as a brother of Vasiṣṭha.

born from a

CANTO XIII

PURANCERI IRUTTA KATAI

OR

THE SUBURBS OF MADURA

AFTER the departure of Cālīṇi, the
female religious dancer, Kōvalaṇ paid his
respects to the feet of the first among saints
(Kavunti) and said:

‘This girl cannot stand the scorching rays
of the sun : and her tender feet can no more
endure the gravel of this barren region. As this
is the kingdom of the Pāṇṭyan of the righteous
sceptre,¹ whose fame has spread far in all

directions, the fierce bear will not hunt the terrible ant-hill,² the striped tiger will not be at enmity with the deer; the reptile, the malignant spirit, the crocodile in search of its prey, and thunder will cause no distress to friends. Instead of travelling by daylight, we can cross this forest by night in the light of the moon who protects many living beings.³ We will suffer no harm.'

The saint accepted the suggestion with approval.

1 The poet ironically makes Kovalan refer to the righteous sceptre of the Pāṇṭyan when he first enters the city of Madura where, later, injustice is done to him.

2 Notice the author's correct knowledge of the habits of animals. It is said that the bear eats from the purru. The implication here is that even wild animals behaved righteously in the Pāṇṭyan kingdom.

3 The days were so hot that night travelling was preferred.

Before these travellers, who awaited the departure of the cruel sun like the subjects of a tyrannical king,¹ appeared the ancestor of the Pāṇṭyas,² the moon, with his retinue of stars, spreading his milk-white rays, when Mother Earth heaved a deep sigh and fell asleep after expressing pity (on Kaṇṇaki) in the words:

‘Dear girl, up to this time thou hast not suffered either the starlike necklace or the sandal-paste to adorn thy young breasts; thou hast not permitted thy locks of hair to be dressed with the flower-dust-laden lily linked up in a chain with other flowers; thou hast not allowed thy body, soft as a tender shoot, to be decorated with garlands, made from the fresh petals of many a flower. Art thou now attracted by the south wind, born in the Malaya hills, nourished in Madura and ever on the tongues of poets, blowing over thee, and by the spring moon shedding his milk-white rays copiously upon thee?’

Kōvalan said to his wife, fatigued by the journey: ‘This night,³

the tiger will cross our path, the owl will

1 Cf. Perumkatai, Bk. LII. canto i, l. 81; also Perumpāṇār-ruppaṭai, ll. 42-3. The subjects of a cruel king look forward anxiously to the departure of their monarch.

2 Tradition attributes the Pāṇṭyan dynasty to a branch of the lunar race. See Cila., canto iv, l. 22. Recent investigations have not thrown much light on the origin of this ancient dynasty, which is certainly more ancient than the visit of Megasthenes to India. Ktesias refers to a people called Pandore, while Clitarchus and Megasthenes call them Mandi (Pāṇḍal?). See Ancient India by J. N. McCrindle, Frag. XXX. In the present state of our knowledge the theory of an indigenous origin of the dynasty lacks much force and can be said to be inconclusive. See Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 179, for their probable origin.

3 According to Aṭṭiyārkunallār, this day was the last day of the month of Aṇi (June-July).

screech, the bear will make a thundering sound; but walk fearlessly on.' He placed her fair arms shining with bangles to rest upon his shoulders.

Then they passed through the forest listening to the righteous words of all-knowing¹ and venerable Kavunti, till a wild fowl, dwelling in a thicket of bamboos which had been scorched by the hot sun, announced the approach of dawn.

(At that time) they reached a village inhabited by Brahmanas,² who wore the sacred thread but who were given to music and dancing, having fallen from the Vedic life.³ Kōvalaṇ lodged the holy saint and his loving wife

1 She was well read in works of dharma. Evidently San- skrit learning had come to stay in the Tamil land much earlier than is generally supposed.

2 A community of Brahmanas, but coming low in the social hierarchy. They are said to be ambanavar who took to the profession of acting and dancing. As they did not pursue their svadharma society regarded them as socially inferior. The position which the Brahmana held in society in the age of the Cankam classics is clear. There was the Vedic Brahmana engaged in reading and teaching the Vēdas and also in performing Vedic sacrifices. He evoked respect from every one. There was the laukika Brahmana who strayed from the prescribed path and took to professions other than those enjoined by the law of the land. In the Akanānūru (st. 24) we have the expression vēlappārppāṇ meaning Brahmana engaged in making bangles. Among the laukikas come the ambanavar also. The term ūrpārppāṇ in South Indian Inscriptions is another reference to the laukika members of the Brahmana community. This only shows that in addition to the Vedic Brahmanas there also existed Brahmanas who took to worldly professions, and to whom society did not give the

same status as that enjoyed by Vedic Brahmanas.

3 Cf. Kuralvenpā, 133-4.

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in a harmless place; and crossing a fence of thorns, he passed along a great road in search of water for his morning ablutions. (On his way) he recalled the journey in that forest alongside his wife and sighed heavily like a bellows. His grief burnt within him. Even his form looked altered, and clouded the vision of Kauśikan¹, who, without recognizing him, addressed the green-leaved *kurukkatti* in whose shade he was standing: 'O *mānavi*² plant, with all thy flowers fallen down, unable to bear the heat of summer, thou seemest to be distressed, even like the flower-like Mānavi of long eyes who has fallen into deep affliction unable to bear Kōvalan's separation from her.'

Kōvalan who was listening to these words of the Brahmana Kauśikan asked, 'What

is it you are saying?' The young Kauśikan went up to him and exclaimed: 'There need be no more anxiety: I have found him.' He then narrated all that had happened in Pukār, as follows: his (Kōvalan's) wealthy father and pious mother are like a serpent that has lost its priceless jewel; his near relations have drowned themselves in an ocean of sorrow like bodies deprived of their souls; his servants have departed to different regions determined to find him out and bring him (Kōvalan) back; the very city of Pukār of ancient fame

1 The commentator interprets Kōśikan as Bandikōśikan. It may also be Bandakauśikan. Apparently this Brahmana belonged to the well-known Kauśika gōtra. The suffix māni in l. 56 shows that he was a bachelor and still in the first stage of life (āśrama). Both terms Kōśikan and Kauśikan are used.

2 Kurukkattl is paśalai or green leaves

the mātavi plant, and the reference to shows that the season was summer. The mātavi plant is compared to the courtesan Mātavi. The distress to the plant is caused by the departure of spring, and to the courtesan by the departure of Kōvalan.

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has gone mad—like Ayōdhyā¹ at the separation of the great hero (Rāma) who (left it and) penetrated the thick jungles saying, ‘To me the kingdom is nothing, but my father’s command is everything’;—Mātavi who heard (the news) from Vasantamālā’s lips, lost her colour and turned green, and fell in a swoon upon the decorated bed in the bedchamber in the middle part of her tall mansion. Kauśi-kan then continued: ‘Much moved by her extreme agony I went to console her,² when that

sorrow-stricken lady said: "I prostrate myself before your feet; kindly see that I suffer no more." She then wrote out a message with her tender hands and gave it to me saying, "Please hand this sealed palm-leaf¹ to him who is as dear to me as the jewel of my own eye." He, the performer of Vedic sacrifices, concluded by saying that he went to several places aimlessly with that message.

He said all this in good faith, and placed in Kōvalan's hands the leaf, given him by the grief-stricken creeper-like Mātavi, with the flowerbuds in her hair. The seal

1 The capital of Daśaratha, king of Ayōdhyā, presented a deserted appearance at the news of Rāma's entering the forest under the orders of his father. (See Rāmāyaṇa, 'Ayōdhyā', ch. 48.) This shows that the epic tradition of the Rāmāyaṇa had become popular in the Tamil land in the early centuries of the Christian era.

2 It was the Brahmana Kausikaṇ who brought Mātavi's message to Kōvalan. In those days it seems to have been a custom for Brahmanas to have free entry into the women's apart-

ments, and give succour to them whenever they needed aid. Also Brahmanas were sent on errands either for the state or on private business.

3 The message was written on a palm-leaf. It was sealed before it was handed over. It is known as *candirakam*, with an ola envelope to an ola letter, shaped in the form of a ring. (See Tamil Lexicon, p. 1268.) That the sealing of letters was common is also evident.

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reminded him of the fragrance of her tresses which she

had dressed with perfumed oil during his stay with her,

and he was therefore loath to break it open. But as he

opened the palm-leaf, he read these words :¹

‘My Lord, I fall prostrate before your feet. Kindly forgive my indiscreet words. What is my mistake which

made you leave (our city) during the night with your wife of noble birth, even without the knowledge of your parents? My mind suffers in ignorance. Please relieve me. O great and true one of exquisite wisdom, may you bless me!

When he had read these words he felt, 'She is not in the wrong; I alone am to blame', and gave Kauśikan back (the message) as if to explain his departure, saying 'The contents of this sealed letter are quite fit to be seen by my faultless parents. I bow at their lotus-feet. O young

Kauśikan, show it to them so that they may cease to be

anxious about me and be free from their agony.

Please go.'

Afterwards he went back to the place where the holy,

righteous Kavunti was staying with his faultless and

chaste wife, and there he joined the company of bards who

were singing (in praise of) Durgā's valorous dance. He

took up the *sengoōṭṭi yāl*² and sounding the *sentiram*,³ he

1 This is Mātavi's message. The implication is that she

had done nothing to cause his final departure or separation from

her. Even if she had committed a fault, she suggests that it was

no greater than his own mistake in leaving his residence and city

without the permission and knowledge of his aged parents. Her

letter was so convincing that Kōvalan thought it fit to redirect it

to his parents to keep them informed of his situation.

2

One of the four kinds of *yāl* (see Intro., p. 61).

3 *Sentiram* constituted of *paṇ* (*śampūraṇam*), *paṇṇiyarṇiram*

(*śāḍavam*), *tiram* (*auḍavam*) and *tirattiram* (*caturttam*). See

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fastened up *tantirikaram* and *tivavu*,¹ joined properly *paṛru* with the existing *orruṛuppu*,² tied up the strings starting from *uḷai* and ending with *kalkkiḷai*, tested carefully with his ear the *āsānṛiṛam*³ of *pāṭarṇāṇi*⁴ sacred to Durgā, at three places (*tāṇam*) according to well recognized conventions;⁵ and after playing the *pāṭarṇāṇi* with those *pāṇar*, he asked them the distance from there to Madura (Kūṭal).

They replied: 'Do you not feel here the south wind blowing from Madura? It is mingled with the divinely fragrant, thin soft mixture made up of the black *akil* paste, the odorous *kunkumam* flower, civet, the excellent sandal-paste, and the paste made from the musk of deer. On its way it rests for a while in the newly-opened flower-buds of the pollen-laden

water-lily, maidenly *campakam*, *mātavi* petals, jasmine (*mallikai*), and home-grown *mullai*. It then mixes with the smoke rising from kitchens, the smoke of the broad bazaar where numbers of cooks fry cakes in pans, the fragrant fumes rising from terraces where live men and women, the smoke of sacrificial offerings, and various other sweet fumes. It finally issues with innumerable and indistinguishable odours from the palace of the conquering Pāṇṭyaṇ wearing (Indra's garland^a on his broad chest,

1 Two of the six limbs of the *śenkōṭṭi yāl*.

2 Orru was a limb of the *śenkōṭṭi yāl* and orruṟuppu is probably a fret.

3 Four kinds of *āśāṇ* : Gāṇḍāram, Śikaṇṭi, Daśākari, and Śuddagāṇḍāram.

4 Here was a mixing up of paṇ and tīram. See above, canto vii, st. 24.

5 This clearly demonstrates that Kōvalaṇ was a master-

musician and was equal to experts in his knowledge of playing the lute.

6 For the tradition of the Pāṇṭyan wearing Indra's garland see above, canto xi, ll. 24-5.

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and fills all places with its oppressive perfume. This is

much unlike the south wind coming from the Potiyil hills,

which is often praised by the unfaltering tongues of

(Caṅkam) poets.¹ Therefore that prosperous city is not

very far from here. Though you go alone, none will obstruct you.²

Afterwards Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki began their journey

by night, as previously, in company with the lady of great

penance.

On their way they heard the thundering sounds
of the morning drum,³ beaten with great
eclat in the great

temple of Siva and other gods,
and in the celebrated

palace of the far-famed king;
(they further heard) the

chanting according to established rules
by Brahmanas who

knew the four Vēdas,⁴ and the
speech of penance-per-

formers engaged in instruction. (They
also heard) the

usual daily sound of the *muḷavu* in honour
of the king's

sword-warriors⁵ who would not return
from the field with-

out victory, the uproar of
war-elephants captured in

battle, the screams of wild elephants

captured in the

1 The reference here is to
Caṅkam poets who have sung the
glories of the Potiyil in many a song.
This establishes the anti-
quity of the Caṅkam as an institution
regarded so even in the days
of the Cilappatikāram.

2 This indicates the hospitality offered
to allens in ancien
Madura.

3 Drums were usually
beaten in the morning both in the
temple and at the palace.

4 Vedic
chanting was usually heard everywhere in the
mornings. Is it a reference to the chanting
of Sattram-Yajur-
Āruṇam?

5 This may be a reference to a festival
of arms. The playing
on muḷavu is said to be a daily function and is
generally in honour

of soldiers who
of battle.

fought to the end without retreating from the field

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forests, the neighing of horses standing in line, the beat of the *kiṇai* drums¹ at daybreak by dancing minstrels, and other tumultuous noises arising from Madura, all of which rivalled the roaring of the dark sea. These noises seemed to welcome the travellers and made them forget all their miseries.

The divine damsel, by name Vaikai, who is ever on the tongues of the poets, celebrated by them for her right conduct in offering protection to the world, and who belongs to the Pāṇṭyas, resembled a flawless noble² maiden with robes of different flowers³ fallen from the date-palm, *vaṇuḷam*, red

cotton tree, *vēṅkai*, white *kaṭampam*, *nākam*,
tilakam, *marutam*, jasmine, pear tree, the tall
cam-pakam, and *pāṭalam*; with her banks the
zone of her broad *alkul*, studded with *kuruku*,
golden jasmine, *musuṇṭai* with thick creeper,
blossoming wild jasmine (*atiral*), the white
kūtālam, *kuṭasam*, *vediram*, luxuriant *pakaṇṇai*
creepers, *piṭavam* and Arabian jasmine
closely intermingled; flowery islets—being
accumulations of sand, facing one against
the other, and richly covered by many flower
trees growing thickly on their sides—her young
and beautiful breasts; the red flowery tree
shedding its flowers on her banks, her red
mouth, and the *mullais* brought by the
current, her lovely teeth; the carps that
frisked along,

1

Kiṇainilai is the theme of the song in praise of a
Vellāla chief to the accompaniment of a *kiṇai* drum.
It was generally performed by dancing minstrels
called *kiṇalpporunar*.

2 The term poyyā applied to the river means it was ever-flowing. And these waters prevented alien kings from entering the Pāṇṭyan capital. It was a kind of nadīdurga or river-for-tress.

3 The river Vaikai is described as a lady, wearing flower- robes, her banks representing her girdle, islets her breasts, mullais her teeth, carps her eyes, and the flowing water her wavy hair.

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hiding and revealing themselves
alternately, her long
eyes; the flowing water, never without
odorous flowers,
her tresses.¹

She (the Vaikai) covered herself with
the holy robes
of sweet flowers and restrained the flow of
tears that filled

her eyes² as if she knew the trouble in
store for youthful
Kaṇṇaki.

Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalan who had
followed a foot-path
through the forest (reached the river
and) praised it
extravagantly saying,³ 'O this is no
stream of waters,
but a stream of flowers.' They
avoided the great
thronged landing-stages where all the
different boats
were moored; some shaped like
horses, some like
elephants and others like lions.⁴ Instead,
they crossed
over the river on a raft, accompanied by
the saint, to
a fragrant grove full of beauteous flowers
on the southern
bank.

They regarded it as an act of great merit to circum-

ambulate the city, the dwelling-place of gods, and they

went round the moat enveloped by the indestructible forest

of defence.⁵ At that time, the dark water-lily, *āmpal*, and

the lotus, as if they understood for certain the unparalleled-

1 Aral may mean thin black sand, or flowing water. Both

are generally compared to the curls of ladies' hair.

2 Here the Vaikai is compared to a lady sympathizing with

Kaṇṇaki's future.

3 The river Vaikai was worshipped by the three travellers as

the divine stream. Cf. Sītā worshipping the Ganges and other

ivers when she was leaving for the Daṇḍaka forest.

4 Rafts of logs were also not uncommon.
Evidently boat-

building as an industry was in existence.

5 A forest which served as a defence
surrounded the moat
encircling the city fortress.

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trouble in store for Kannaki and her husband,
seemed to quake with grief (represented) by
the waving of their stems¹ and their eyes filled
with tears, while the bees that rested (in them)
seemed to produce a mourning note in a spirit
of sympathy. Lofty flags that² were set
upon the outer wall of the fortress in
commemoration of victory over enemies, seemed
to say by a deprecating wave of hands 'Do not
come (into the city).'

The travellers passed through fertile paddy

fields-filled with birds and groves and entered the suburbs of the ancient city-fortress,³ inhabited by none other than the men practising *dharma*, with residential quarters intersected by streams of fresh floods, lakes of expansive waters, fruit-bearing coconuts, plantain trees, areca palms, and bam-boo sheds⁴ for supplying water.

1 Their shaking is caused by the wind waving their stems,
and the tears are drops of honey.

2 The capture of the flags of the victory. After capture they were usually enemy was a sign of fixed on the outer wall

of the fortress. The flag waving its hands means that the wind blew against it and thus seemed to urge the travellers to go back.

3 The suburbs near the forest wall (purañcēri) were the

residential quarters of the penance-performers,
ascetics and other
sādhus.

4 This shows that rest-houses were erected at important places for travellers and the chief material used for such buildings was bamboo. Cf. Aśoka's inscriptions where this emperor is said to have built rest-houses on the roads.

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CANTO XIV

URKAN KATAI

OR

SEEING THE CITY

To the singing of birds in the suburban groves, in the tracts of shining water, and in the paddy fields bent with the weight of crops, the sun, an object of worship by the whole world, made the lotus in the lake open its petals, and awoke to the morning half-light the inhabitants of lofty Madura of the Pāṇṭyan who held the sword that made his enemy's heads tremble. At that time the thunder of the morning drum rose high accompanied by the blowing of the white conch from the temples¹ of Śiva with the forehead eye, of Viṣṇu with the Garuḍa standard, of Baladeva with the plough, and of Subrahmaṇya with the cock-flag, and from the residences² of those proclaiming *dharma*,³ as well as from the palace of the victorious king.⁴

1 Cf. Maṇi., canto v, l. 54.

2 The terms used in the text to denote a temple are *kōil*, *niyamam*, *nakaram*, *kōṭṭam* and *paṭṭi*. The last term, *paṭṭi* is invariably used in connexion with Jaina temples.

3 Cf. Maṇi., canto i, ll. 54-5. For an explanation of the term *aṭṭurai* see Kuralvenpā 41, et seq. The *turai* of *turavaram* constitutes *carya*, *kriya*, *yoga* and *jñānam*: the means of attaining *yoga* are eightfold. (See Tolk., 'Puratt.', sūtra 20 and the commentary of Naccinārkkinīyar thereon).

4 The *turai* of *maram* is sevenfold: *veṭci*, *karantai*, *vañci*, *kāñci*, *nocci*, *uṭṭinai*, and *tumpai*. See Pura., *venpāmālai*. The

reference here is to seven kinds of conquest. Cf. *Studies in Tamil*

Literature and History, pp. 239-42.

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Kōvalaṇ went to make obeisance with his hands to the saint Kavunti and said:¹ 'O saint distinguished for great penance, as one who has strayed from the righteous path, I am in the abject condition of seeing this girl, tender as a flower, suffer great pain by wandering through unknown lands. Until I return after informing the princely merchants² of this ancient city about my situation, this lady of mine will be under your protection.³ Have you any objection to that, O holy saint?'

To this Kavunti replied: 'Because your good deeds in past births are exhausted, you and your lady-love now experience unequalled distress. Though virtuous men proclaim eloquently with the drumstick of their tongues on the drum of their mouths, "Avoid the path of unrighteousness; if not,

it will lead to bitter reaction," still those who are by nature bad will not take this precept to heart. But when an evil deed brings its own reaction, they become maddened excessively by misery born of ignorance. On the other hand wise and learned people will not grieve when the unavoidable reaction of past *karma* shows itself.

'The suffering at parting from one's love, the suffering leading to the union of lovers, and the suffering caused by the formless god (Cupid) visit only those who enjoy the love of curly-headed maidens, and not sages who lead a life of celibacy. Many in the world have fallen into dire distress by regarding women and food as objects of pleasure, and seeing this, sages have relinquished the desire for

1 A confession by Kōvalan of his guilt.

2

Literally, Vaisya next in rank to the Kṣatriya caste.

3 Here Kōvalan seems to imply that Kāṇṇaki was under the protection of Kavunti and was to continue so.

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both. Not only now but many times in the
past man has

been entrapped by the wiles of a love based
on desire and

endless suffering.

Do you not know that he¹ who went
with his wife (into the forest) on the command
of his father

(Daśaratha) and suffered great agony at her
(subsequent)

separation, was the father of Him who
revealed the

Vēdas?² Is it not a long-remembered fact?

He (Naija) lost his kingdom in a
gambling court³ and

penetrated the deep forest in company
with his tender

wife.⁴ Neither was he devoid of love for her,
nor was she

a woman of bad and low nature.
Was not Fate hard that

he went away in the dead of night
leaving her in the wild

jungle?⁵ Can you say that any accused her
(Damayanti)

of any fault? You are not like them, for
have you not

enjoyed union with your pretty wife? Do
not grieve:

but go to the king's city, 'Madura, and
return when you

have found a suitable (dwelling) place.'

Kōvalan then went through a street
above a narrow

passage (*suranga*)⁶ constructed to admit
groups of ele-

1 Another statement to demonstrate that the

Rāmāyaṇa was

well known in South India at this time.

2 This refers to the legend that when Viṣṇu was engaged

in yoganidra Brahmā the Creator came out of his navel. Hence

Brahmā was the son of Viṣṇu and was the giver of the Vēdas.

3 Vallāḍāyam (Sans., dyūtam).

4 The reference is to the story of Nalā and Damayanti,

which is the theme of the Nalādhya Kāvya,

5 Nalā left Damayanti in the forest in a half-naked con-

dition in the dead of night (Mhb., 'Vana Parvan,' ch. 62). This

also shows that the story of the Mahābhārata was popular in the

Tamil land (see 'Nalāpākhyānaparvan' for the full story).

6 It may be remembered that this word

śuranga is important

as determining the authenticity of the

phants with their long trunks, leading from the moat with its vast expanse of sparkling waters, encircled by a well-guarded defence forest.¹ Unsuspected by the ranks of the best Yavana swordsmen² who guarded it, he next entered the forest-gate, where flags waved in the westerly breeze, and saw the interior (of the city) glittering like the opened jewel-box of thousand-eyed Indra.

In the streets³ he saw courtesans, lost to all shame and chastity, accompanying their rich lovers to the pleasure garden with its tall *maruta* trees⁴ on the banks of the swelling Vaikai, and on white sand dunes. He also saw them engaged in water-sports, in boats with high cabins and in canoes, swimming and holding on to the rafts.⁵

He saw, besides, in a

grove of the ancient city which appeared like a golden creeper, courtesans gracefully placing cool fragrant *mullais*, water-lilies, and *neytals* with

1 Ilai is the defensive wall of a fortress and mīlai is the forest zone encircling the moat surrounding a citadel.

2 Aṭiyārkunallār speaks of them as Turks. It may possibly be a reference to Greeks. But to the natives of ancient India all foreigners were Yavanas. They were employed by for military service.

Tamil kings

3 A description of the interior of the city. The rest of the canto shows Kōvalaṇ going through the principal streets.

4 It would appear that there was a special place which went by the name of tirumarutanturai. The Kalittokai also makes a reference to it. These reference show that that place was a public park. See Maturaikkāñci, l. 356.

5 Boats and rafts of different descriptions were used to cross the rivers. The names given are nirmādam, nāval, and pūṇal. Some of them were covered and some open. The pūṇal was an open raft. People either swam holding on to it or they sat on it and crossed.

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open petals in their hair which was already dressed with long wreaths of white flowers, jasmine, *viriyal*, and the pollen of the cool red lily; and fastened with pearls from the great harbour of Korkai.¹ (They were further seen) anointing their bodies with luxurious sandal-paste from the southern Malaya hills.

At

beds in

nightfall he saw maidens on their flower-strewn the moonlit terraces where their lovers banished

their fatigue (by recalling
ent seasons of the year).²

their experiences in the differ- said,) when
(During the rainy season, they north wind,

the king, of the clouds appeared with the
decorated the noisy city of Madura in red

(*cervanī*),³ and showed to her (Madura) the king of Gods
(Indra) who had clipped the wings of mountains with his

1 Korkal was one of the great ports of that time. It was
noted for excellent pearl-fisheries. See *Maturaikkāñci*, ll. 134 and
144. Probably Ptolemy's Kolkhoi was Korkal (McCrindle, op.
cit., p. 57 ff.). The site of this town is now about five miles in-
land, where a new emporium arose. This was the Kayal of Marco
Polo who visited it in the thirteenth century. (See *Travels of*
Marco Polo, ed. by Sir Henry Yule, Vol. II., pp. 372-3.) There
is a clear reference to the pearls and to the port in the *Kaṭṭaliya*
Arthaśāstra.

2 The poet describes the life led by men
and women in the city during the six different seasons
of the year—the rainy season,
the cold season, the season of early dew, the

season of late dew, spring and summer. These are known in Sanskrit as Varṣar̥tu, Śiṣir̥tu, Hēmantar̥tu, Saratar̥tu, Vasantam, and Grīṣmam. When Kovalan entered the city it was the middle of summer.

3 Cevvan̄ is a term of much importance in Akapporu. If during his wife's menstrual period the hero spent his time with a courtesan, the custom was for the confidante to appear before him dressed entirely in red. The hero then returned home. Perhaps Iḷanko took Madura to be the confidante, Indra to be the hero, and the women of Madura to be the heroines.

thunderbolt,² they (the
waists scarlet silk with
ladies of the city) wore in their
flower-work thereon, adorned their

tresses (already dressed with flower-buds) with wild olive; adorning them further with the fragrant and fresh-blown *kuṛiñci* and red *tāḷi* flowers which grew on the slopes of the Cirumalai hills. (They then) painted their breasts with red sandal-paste, and further beautified them with garlands of coral, and garlands of the curved petals of red *Cenḱōḷu* flowers.

During the cold season modest damsels and their lovers, who had painted their chests with fragrant pastes, seated themselves in front of the censer charged with the wood of incense trees, and closed the lattice windows² (of their apartments) in mansions seeming to reach the sky, built by expert architects.³

During the season of early dew, ladies sat with their

lovers on the moonlit terraces of their big houses, to receive

the warmth of the rising sun, who appeared with his expand-

ing rays on the southern horizon dispelling the white clouds.

1 This legend is well known in Sanskrit literature. Tradition has it that mountains once had wings and consequently flew from one place to another. Then Indra had their wings clipped. Some of them in fear hid themselves in the deep waters of the ocean. See the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Sundara', ch. 1.

2 These were windows peculiar to those days. See Studies in Tamil Literature and History, pp. 263-4. It is of absorbing interest to note similar institutions in the Indus Valley during the chalcolithic period. In the Annual Report, 1928-9 of the Archaeological Survey of India, the remark is made that no windows have been discovered in the Mohenjo-daro buildings excavated. 'In all probability there were only simple ventilation holes just beneath the ceilings of the rooms.'—Report, p. 69.

3 Arumpatavuralyaśiriyar refers to a treatise on architecture entitled Mayamatam.

(The lovers continued to talk, asking) where is the king (the season) of late dew in the month Paṅkuni, who would witness the festival of the Bow sacred to hard-hearted Cupid (Neṭuval)¹ in the Paṅṭyan city and enter with the east wind and with a fleet of high, broad ships, carrying different kinds of incense, silks, sandals, scents, and camphor brought as tribute, from Tonṭi?²

Moreover, where else can we see the king of spring,

who unites joyful lovers in the Pāṇṭyan city, bringing with him the south wind from the Potiyil hills of Tennavan, giving *māṭavi* creepers luxuriant growth and filling groves and jungles with fragrant flowers?

In this way creeper-like ladies rested with their husbands recalling the different seasons.

(Continuing, they said) on the last day when the king of spring reigning over Madura considered removing to other places, the continuously hot sun and the westerly breeze, entered (the city) and scorched the entire jungle

1 Vilyṭṭa is the festival in honour of the God of Love. Neṭuvēḷ, literally, means 'The Great Vēḷ' or one who kindles eternal desire. The festival is generally held in the month of Pāṅkuni in the season of late dew. In the Tamil land the festival is still celebrated in that month. See Kuruntokai, st. 31.

2. This Toṇṭi must have been a great port, belonging to the Cōla, or more probably the Pāṇṭyan kingdom. This must not be confused with Toṇṭi, another port in the dominion of the Cēraś. See Puṇam., st. 17 and 48. The tribute offered by the chief of Toṇṭi in ships was akil, silks, garlands, scents, and camphor. Most of these came from the Archipelago islands in the east. For detailed comments on these articles see the gloss of Aṭṭyārk-kunallar. The Cilappatikāram says that ships entered with koṇṭal or the east wind. If it is a reference to Cēra Toṇṭi, koṇṭal would not have been mentioned. Perhaps this Toṇṭi can be identified with a place of the same name in the present Ramnad district.

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and hilly tracts, making herds of elephants
and their young

ones tremble; wealthy maidens (wearing
golden bangles)

completely loyal to the king, embraced
him anew and

received from him as presents covered carts,
palanquins,

sleeping-couches with jewelled legs, physical
happiness in

the pleasure-gardens,¹ *kauri* fans of yaks'

tails, golden

betel-boxes, and sharp swords. These maidens drank

sweet wine from pure golden goblets held by their maid-

servants and became inebriated. When trying to drive

away with their fragrant flower-garlands striped bees² (that

had settled on them), they hit places where the bees were

not. In smiling they showed their pear-like teeth through

their red lips and sang words of praise which they had not

sung during their separation (*pulavi*); but when they began

the eight modes of singing,³ their tongues failed and pro-

voked only laughter in their hearers. The extremities of

their long carplike eyes, red like the opened

buds of a

bright *Ceṅkaḷunīr* flower, bespoke their anger,
while pers-

piration gathered on their tiny foreheads,
bearing the

tilaka, and their murderous bow-like
eye-brows curved

downwards, all of which was longingly
observed by men

of noble families. In this way these women
afforded amuse-

ment to the ruler of the earth.

1 Tam., uyyāṇam; Sans., udyāna. This
refers to the king's

concubines to whom he occasionally made
presents, such as those
mentioned.

2 The women drank so much that their eyes
became reddened

and deceived the bees into thinking that they
were not eyes but

honey-laden flowers.

3 Kaṭṭurai constitutes eight kinds of song

if the reading is

எட்டுக்கு. But the reading எடுக்கும் may be conveniently substi-

tuted. It would then mean that they tried to speak but their

words stuck in their throats.

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(After passing this street) Kōvalan went through the highway with its double row of¹ beautiful mansions which crowned kings frequented secretly. residences of courtesans who had never

These were the
been punished with
the carrying of burnt tiles,² and of dancers who knew the technique of the two musical conventions, *vēttiya* and *potuviya*³ and had perfect knowledge of the four⁴ characteristics (of dancing),⁵ songs, of bagpipes accompanied by musical time-beats, the music

instruments made of leather used in the dancing theatre. They also knew of the much renowned *talaikkōl* and of the sweet and seven-fold strains, and were accompanied by the *tōriyamaṭanṭai*⁸ who sang the *vāram*, by the girl who sang the opening song and by the girl who sang the middle song and who

1 The double rows are probably *śrutaṇam* (residences of the middle classes) and *perutaṇam* (residences of the wealthy classes).

2 This may mean that they were living in lofty houses built of burnt bricks and tiles. Another meaning (adopted here) is that the courtesans were free from the punishment of bearing tiles. The custom was to inflict this punishment on anybody who swerved from the prescribed conventions. The damsel had to

walk round the city in procession bearing seven tiles on her head.

To this disgrace the courtesans of Madura were not subjected.

3 Both these are known as Vacaikkūttu. See Maṇḍ., canto

ii, i, 18. While vēttiyaḷ was intended for royalty, potuviyaḷ was a

popular performance (see Arumpatavuraḷ).

4 The paṇ was fourfold, pālai, kuṟṟiṇci, marutam and sevvai.

5 Vari is of seven kinds. It may also refer to the seven strings beginning with kural.

6 The toriyamaṭantal was an aged dancing girl who sung the

vāram to the accompaniment of a dance by a young girl. She

was assisted by two more girls, talaippāṭṭukkūṭṭi initiating the

song, and the ṭaippāṭṭukkūṭṭi helping in the middle by singing.

acted in four different entertaining ways, and (when sing- ing) reached the eighth (note) for which she was rewarded every day with gifts ranging from one to 1008 *kaṣaṇcus* of gold.

Caught in the eye-nets of these goddess-like damsels

(*aṇaṅku*),¹ even religious men, take leave of their disciplin-

ed senses, while young people dallying carnally with girls

like bees sucking honey from flower after flower, and new

initiates to the revelries of Cupid, will not leave those

mansions, without listening to the girls' songs, and to the

parrot-like talk of the women skilled in the sixty-four arts.²

Kōvalaṇ then saw in the bazaar,³ covered carts and

other vehicles,⁴ ornamented chariots, coats
of mail, attrac-

tive goads, gloves used in warfare,
efficacious medicines,

curved bludgeons, white furry fans,
pig-faced shields,

leather shields, shields with a picture of
the forest on them,

machines fitted with spears,⁵ workers in
copper, bronze-

workers, newly-made ropes, garland-makers,
saws made of

steel, instruments for ivory cutting,
burning incense

1 Apanku corresponds here to the
Mōhīnī of Sanskrit
Literature.

2 The sixty-four arts are elaborately given
in the Kāmasūtr.
of Vātsyāyana.

3 What we call kaṭāṅgu streets
in modern Indian cities.

These are shops of wholesale dealers. Four such

are mentioned.

4 It may be noted that these vehicles were all drawn by bullocks.

5 A number of instruments of war are mentioned here as being sold in open bazaars. The instruments for ivory cuttings flower-work, the decorative arts, etc., show the high state of culture reached in the early centuries of the

Christian era. 236

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(*pukai*),¹ pastes, and flower-work, which were so rich and innumerable that they even evoked the envy of monarchs.

Kōvalan next passed through the wealthy street unpenetrated by enemies, full of groups of dealers in superior diamonds² which were free from such defects as crows' feet, spots, holes and lines, which had no natural deficiencies observable by experts of trained acuteness, and which reflected the colours of the four castes.³ Emeralds

of green brilliance free from black spots and defects of line and curve; the *māṇikkam* variety known as *patumam*,

nilam, *bindu*, and *spaṭikam*, all of which were free from recognized defects; the *pusparāga* set with gold resembling a cat's eye; the beautiful sardonyx (*gōmēdaga*) with the faultless brilliance of the sun; the blue gem with crystalized darkness; the double-coloured *vaidūrya*;⁴ the good gems of five different kinds born from a common source⁵

and glimmering like the setting sun, as well as heaps of

white pearls (*candrāguru*), pink-lustred pearls (*angāraka*)⁶

1 Pukai stands for all the varieties of burning incense used

at that ancient time.

2 Experts in the art of cutting gems. The nine kinds of

precious stones are mentioned.

Aṭiyārkunallar furnishes interest-

ing details as regards their superiority and fineness as well as of

the defects of each one of them.

The commentator's study is

scientific and deserves close scrutiny.

3 The colours of four castes, white, red, green and black

are distinguished in the diamonds.

4 The interpretation of Arumpatavurai is followed in 11.

189-90. What this Āśiriyār, interprets as gōmēdaga, Aṭiyārkkū-

nallār interprets as Vaidūrya, and vice versa.

5 The common source of some of the gems was crystal quartz.

6 It is interesting to note that some of the pearls are named

after the planets soma, guru, and angāraka.

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and pearls of the finest quality (*āṇimuttu*),¹ all of which sparkled without any blemish caused by wind or sand, stone or water. There were also well-formed corals completely free from flaws in their inner cavities, without stones in their interspaces, and untwisted.²

The excellent streets of the goldsmiths were next seen with flags³ enabling the gold-dealers to avoid confusion as to the kind of gold available in each shop variously called *jātarūpa*, *kiḷicciṟai* (parrot's wings), *āṭakam* and *jāmbū-nadam*.

He then went through the street of cloth merchants, where several kinds of bundles were piled up, each of a hundred cloths woven of cotton thread, hair, or silk thread;⁴ the street of corn-chandlers where merchants were seen going about here and there with balances, measuring-vessels known as *parai*, and grain-measures (*ambaṇam*),⁵ filled with sacks⁶ of grain and black pepper

1 Aṭiyārkkunallār interprets ll. 195-6 as follows: 'Pearls of

the round sort, their natural colour white (voḷḷi) and pink (angāraka).

2 The defects and merits of corals are furnished here. One

defect is that during the course of its growth, stones entered into

the interspaces. Such corals were considered inferior.

3 Four kinds of gold were offered for sale and in front of

each shop hung a flag—the signpost indicative of the kind of gold available within.

4 Clothes were made from cotton, rat's hair, silk thread, see

Clvākacintāmaṇi, st. 2686.

5

For ambaṇavaḷavai, see Paṭṭiru., p. 66, 2nd. ed. It was a

grainmeasure equal to the modern marakkāḷ. Paṇai was another measuring-vessel in use.

6 The word grain, according to the commentator, stands for sixteen kinds of grains grouped in bags in the streets. One of them was pepper.

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irrespective of the seasons; the four different streets, occupied by the men of the four castes;¹ the intersection of three streets;² the termini of four streets;³ the streets of petty shops; *maṇrams*; lanes and broad streets; and finally went beyond the ramparts (of the city) through the shade of an arbour⁴ of clustering green leaves, impervious to the fierce rays of the sun blazing in the sky. Seeing thus the great city of the protecting (Pāṇṭyaṇ) king, Kōvalaṇ was highly pleased.

1 There were caste streets as distinguished from other streets of

the city, where lived artisans and other classes pursuing different arts and crafts.

2 The term used generally is *ṣāṇḍi*, sometimes, *muccanti*.

3 The *catukkam* was also known as *nāṇḍi*.

4 According to the commentator, the shade of the numerous flags and festoons offered shelter to the passer-by. But this does not seem quite appropriate, since *Koḷaṇ* went outside the rampart from the interior of the city.

CANTO XV

ATAIKKALAK KATAI

OR

THE HAVEN

HAVING seen the ancient and great city of Madura distinguished for the highly righteous sceptre, the coolness of the (royal) umbrella, and the prowess of the spear of the Kauriyar¹ who dutifully turned the wheel of law under the merciful guidance of a bountiful providence,² and never deserted by its law-abiding citizens,³

Kōvalan went outside

1 Among the titles given to the Pāṇṭya, one is Kauriyar. The two terms Pāṇṭyan and Kauriyar which occur in Caṅkam literature strongly suggest that they are derived from Pāṇṭu and Kuru. We know of the Pāṇṭavas and Kauravas as foster-brothers fighting the great war recounted in the Mahābhārata, at ancient Kurukṣētra. Both belonged to one and the same stock. Apparently a branch of this stock was established in the extreme south of India and became prominent among South Indian dynasties. But there is evidence suggesting an indigenous origin to this dynasty as the present writer has ventured to conjecture in a footnote in his *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, p. 179. The subject requires further examination and scrutiny.

2 It means there was no hunger, disease, theft or trouble from neighbours (see canto v, st. 72).

3 The idea is that the king was such a just monarch that the people of the city never thought of leaving it for a foreign land. It may be noted in passing that it was a custom in ancient India for the people to forsake

their kings if they conducted themselves unrighteously, by deserting their capital for that of other and more just kings.

See the Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra. Bk. XIII, § 1.

This seems to have been an effective weapon on the part of the

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the gates of the fortress, into the grove wherein dwell monks engaged in imparting *dharma*.

And while he was narrating to the sage Kavunti the undiminishing prosperity of Madura and the prowess of the Pāṇṭyan king, Mātalan of Talaiccenkānam,¹ the first amongst Brahmanas, well versed in the four Vēdas appeared at their residence in the grove surrounded by a shallow moat. He had come there to obtain relief from the fatigue of his journey while returning to his own family, after circumambulating the hill² sacred to the great sage, and bathing in the bathing

ghat of the Kumari.

To him Kōvalan prostrated himself, while the Brahmana skilled in speech,³ on being addressed, replied as follows :

‘When Mātavi, tender as the young mango-leaf, after winning the king’s gift⁴ for dancing, gave birth to a tender

subjects to make the king conduct himself justly and truly towards them.

1 Talaiccenkānam is Talaiccenkāṭu, a village of the ancient

Čōla kingdom, perhaps identical with the village now bearing

that name about six miles south-west of Kāvērippattinam. It is

a sacred place mentioned in the Tēvāram.

2 Potiyil, sacred to the sage Agastya. For the Agastya

tradition in the South and Greater India, the reader’s attention is

Dikshitar’s Some Aspects of the Vāyu Purāṇa (Madras Univer-

sity, 1933), in the section
entitled 'Agastya and Greater India.'

See also K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's 'Agastya', in
Tijdschrift Van
Ind., Vol LXXVI, No. 4.

3 This special attribute given by the poet
Māṭalan shows
that the latter was famous for his oratorical powers.

4 The Cola king under reference who had
given *Mātavi* a special gift for dancing is identified by
the commentator *Aṭiyārkkū-*

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babe and passed through the period of
pollution,¹ you responded to the sweet words
appropriate to the occasion of the older dancers
who desired that the daughter should be given a
fitting name, by saying. "An ancestor of mine²
was once shipwrecked in the dead of night in the
great sea of mighty waves; but because he had
performed several good deeds, he kept himself
afloat by swimming for some days."³

Then appeared
before him the deity of the sea⁴ saying, 'I
live here under orders from Indra. I have
come before you. Be not afraid; my name is
Maṇimēka-lai.⁵

The fruits of your great charity are not lost.
Surmount the great ocean of your suffering';
and thus she saved him from his distress by
bringing him back to the shore. As she is my
family deity, let her name be given

nallār as Karikāla. But the latest researches point
to a somewhat different conclusion. (See P. T. S.
Iyengar's *History of the Tamils*, pp. 372 ff; K. A.
Nilakanta Sāstri's *Studies in Cōla*

History and Administration, pp. 19 ff.; M. Raghava Aiyangar's
Cēraṇ Cenguttuvan, 3rd ed., pp. 101 ff.; and K. N. Sivaraja Pillai's
The Chronology of the Early Tamils, pp. 88 ff.)

1 Evidently the observance of rules regarding
pollution during the period of confinement was an
ancient Tamil practice.

2 Cf. Maṇi., canto vii, ll. 33-8; canto xxix,
l. 19. See Dikshitar's paper 'Buddhism in Tamil

Literature' in Buddhist Studies (Calcutta), edited By B. C. Law, 'p. 679, for a fuller version of the story.

3 'Some day's may be taken to be 'seven days' in the light of the text in the Maṇimēkalai, canto xxix, l. 16.

4 This story has a parallel in the Buddhist Jataka stories. See E. B. Cowell, Jātakas, Vol. IV, pp. 9-13; Vol. VI, Nos. 442 and 539, p. 22.

5 Maṇimēkalai, the guardian deity of the sea, was the family deity of Kovalan.

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to this baby.' Then a thousand courtesans with jewelled girdles blessed the child with the name Maṇimēkalai.¹

On that day when you sat with that happy lady Mātavi, and showered gifts of gold with your beautiful hands, a Brahmana, with bent body, having attained the very limits of

knowledge and good conduct,² came feebly along with the aid of a stick in order to receive gifts. Seeing him in the clutches of a fast and furious elephant which had thrown its mahout and was rushing in all directions to the loud noise of the drum,³ O merciful hero, you stepped forth instantly with a cry, and after rescuing that man of high birth, you released yourself from its curved hollow trunk and remaining between the white tusks, stood on its nape like a Vidyadhara on a dark hill, and curbed the still furious beast.

‘On another occasion, a Brahmana left for the north abandoning his wife who had caused the death of a young mongoose.⁴ When she followed him, the Brahmana said :
‘It is not proper for me to eat food served by your hands.

1 The ceremony of naming a child, still current in India as *nāmakaraṇam*, was one of the many

samiskāras specially incum- bent on the twice-born classes. We know from literature that Kōvalan was a Vaiśya and hence belonged to the class of the twice-born.

2 The śiṣṭa according to Sanskrit didactic literature.

3 It seems to have been a peculiar ancient custom in Tamil India that when an elephant became must and went rampaging through the streets, a drum was sounded so as to be heard throughout the city warning citizens of the mad elephant's movements.

This kept people within doors lest they should fall victims to the beast.

4 For this folk-tale see the Pañcatantra. See also Dik- shitar's paper on 'Folklore and the Migration of Legends' in the Annals of the

Bhandarkar Research Institute, 1934, pp. 212-19.

You give this note containing a Sanskrit verse¹ to people leading a virtuous life." With this the Brahmana lady went through the bazaars

where the tall mansions of the wealthy merchants were, and showed the note from house to house proclaiming, "O, will no one relieve me of my sins and enjoy the fruits of so doing?" At once you called to her and asked, "What is your trouble and what is this (note)?" The lady narrated to you the great distress she was in, and said, "Take this leaf on which has been written the verse, and by giving me money absolve me from my great sin." You replied to her, "Do not fret, do not be afraid. I shall relieve you of your difficulty"; and in order that her sinful deed might be atoned for, you made gifts in accordance with the instituted rules,¹ and relieved that lady of her worry. O wealthy

1 The śloka quoted by Aṭiyārkkuṇallār is from the Pañca- tantra, Bk. V. Tale 1, and is as follows:

*Aparikṣya na kartavyam kartavyam
suparikṣitam |*

*Paścāt bhavati santāpō brāhmaṇi nakulam
yathā ||*

The context shows that the story occurred in Pukār during the lifetime of Kōvalan. But as it finds mention in an earlier text like Tantrākhyāyika, an earlier recension of the Pañcatantra, this raises a great chronological difficulty. One way out of this tangle is to consider it a later interpolation. Whether or not the story be true, it bears testimony to the fact that Kōvalan possessed a sound knowledge of Sanskrit. Apparently the note was a cadjan leaf on which had been written the verse by the Brahmana.

2 Belief in expiatory rites shows that the influence of the Dharmasūtras and Dharmaśāstras had gained ground in the Tamil land. This indicates the charitable nature of Kōvalan' and also that Kōvalan's wealth was limitless. In this connexion the term uruporul is interesting. According to the Kuralvenpā 756, it is the unclaimed property that went to fill the coffers of the king.

But Kōvalan could not have unclaimed property. Hence it is

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man of imperishable riches! Then you made her husband, who had left for the forest,

(come back and) live with her in the right path (of household life) by giving them copious wealth out of your limitless riches.

‘On still another occasion, a chaste lady was falsely accused. A man who went to her husband and gave false evidence was seized by the cruel noose of a Būtam, who devoured such offenders.¹ Seeing the deep sorrow of the mother of that erring man, you at once entered the knots of that noose and said to the gracious and good Būtam, “Take away my life and yield him his”. Without agreeing, it said, “There is no prescription to accept a good life in the place of a bad life, lest I should lose thereby the enjoyment of the next world. Please give up the idea”. When the Būtam had devoured him in your presence, O best among householders, you accompanied that lady, grief-stricken at heart, and like a close relative, prevented for several years the exhaustion of hunger which would have overtaken his family² and all its cognate branches.

correct to accept Tolkāppyaṇār's interpretation of 'much' or 'copious'.

1 This points to the prevalent practice of punishing false witnesses with death. Cf. Kuṇṭokai, st. 184. It is interesting to note that the Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra rules to that effect. But the method of meting out this punishment is rather strange. There was the Būtam whose function it was to punish with death all who committed heinous offences. It would not accept a good life for a bad one. In fact the Būtam had no power to do so. See also canto v, ll. 128 and 134.

2 Dayādins of Sanskrit literature. This also demonstrates the existence of the joint-family system in the Tamil land, and how there was a vast family of dependents on a single earning member, and how after his death, wealthy neighbours volunteered to give succour.

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'I know all the good things you have done in this

birth,¹ but owing to your deeds in the past
birth, O Gōpālā²
of ripe knowledge, you have fallen into
indescribable
suffering along with your gem-like young
wife who is like
Lakṣhmī herself.’

To this Kōvalan_n replied, ‘Half awake in
the middle of
the dark night I dreamt thus :³ “Through a
low person in
this city, well defended by the righteous
monarch, this
girl with the five plaits of fragrant hair
suffered great
agony; stripped of my robes by some
stranger I mounted
a horned buffalo. Later in the company of
this handsome
lady of the charmingly curled hair, I
attained the great
status⁴ of those who have renounced

attachment. I also

saw Mātavi yielding her daughter
Maṇimēkalai to a

Buddhist saint of great glory,⁵ thereby
making the god

of love fling his flower dart on the barren
ground and sob
helpless."

'I anticipate some imminent trouble.'

1 Cf. Kuraḷvenpā, 169, and the commentary
of Parimēla-
lakar.

2 Gopāla seems to be the Sanskrit variant
to the Tamil
name Kōvalaṇ.

3 Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar refers to the
treatise entitled

Kaṇānūl, discovered and published for the first
time in Sentamil,

Vol. I, Pt. III, and subsequently published as
a booklet by

Vidvan R. Raghava Aiyangar. A parallel may be
drawn from

the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Ayōdhya', ch. 59, where Bharata dreams a fearful

dream during the night of Daśaratha's death, the latter riding in

a southerly direction, in a chariot yoked with asses. Cf. Kaṇānūl,

st. 2, 4, 10 and 15; Puram., st. 41; Kuṛaḷvenpā, 247.

4 He obtained salvation which was generally secured only

by men of detachment from mundane things. This means that the

bondage of birth and death ceased to exist for him.

5 See Maṇi., canto ii, ll. 73-4, etc.

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Then the Vedic Brahmana and the saint Kavunti

together observed: 'As this place outside the city¹ is not fit to be lived in except by righteous monks, leave here for the interior of the vast city, to the residences of Vaiśyas² who will receive you because of your past reputation.

Leave this place before sunset and enter the city of Madura

with its tall mansions.'

Just then, Mātari, an old woman of the cowherd

caste, who was returning after making the usual offering of

milk to the flower-eyed yakṣi³ enshrined outside the city gates in the quarters of monks practising *dharma*, saw and prostrated herself before the saint Kavunti who then thought within herself: 'The life of cowherds who protect cows and offer what they yield is not harmful.'⁴ This aged lady is without fault and is, besides, virtuous

1 Puraccirai are the quarters outside the gates of the city,

being the residences of those who dedicate themselves to a life of

holiness and detachment and consequently householders are unfit

to live in them.

2

Valśyas are said to be next in rank to the Kṣatriyas.

3 Yakṣi-dēvatā. Dr Swaminatha Aiyar in a

note informs us

that in the Jalna books, every one of the twenty-four Tirthan-

karas was served by a Yakka and Yakkini. This name is current

as Isakki in places round about Cape Comorin. Aṭṭiyāṅkunallār interprets it as āriyāṅkaṇai, and on the authority of the Tiruviṭṭai-yaṭal Purāṇam, st. 63, l. 17, āriyāṅkaṇai, is one who takes to

asceticism during the life-time of her husband. Her shrine was

situated outside the city proper (puracchrai). But we know from

history and legends as testified to by the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahā-

vamśa that the Yakṣas were one of the early ruling tribes in

ancient South India and Ceylon, and died out some time before

the commencement of the Christian era.

4

This testifies to the simple and god-fearing life led by members of the community of cowherds,

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and merciful. It is not therefore wrong to
lodge Kaṇṇaki
with Mātari.'

She then addressed Mātari thus:

'Listen! If mer-

chants of this city hear the name of this
lady's father-in-

law,¹ they will welcome him (her husband)
as a guest,

as if they had received a rare fortune, and
take him and

this lady of the beaming-eyes to their
well-guarded home²

along with them. Till she goes to the
houses of those

very rich people, accept her, O cowherdess,
as a refugee.

Give this auspicious girl an excellent bath,
decorate her

long red eyes with black collyrium, adorn
her soft tresses

with choice flowers, deck her in pure

clothes and as be-

comes worthy people, remain as her maid,
protectress and
mother. Accept her. Mother Earth had no
compassion^a

on the tender tread of this creeper-like girl,
who came

with me. Oblivious of her own suffering
this celebrated

lady, although fainting from thirst in the
scorching sun,

felt more keenly the suffering of her
husband. We

(Kavunti) have not seen any shining deity
other than this

goddess who has taken the vow of chastity
necessary to

devoted housewives. Do you not know the
truth of the

good saying that in a land where chaste
women live, rains

will not fail,⁴ prosperity will not decrease,

and the great

monarch's victory will not diminish?

1 This shows that Mācāttuvān's name was well known to the merchants of Madura. It would appear that he was a princely merchant.

2 This points to the fact that the houses of wealthy merchants were under watch and ward, and this is not surprising considering the stories of expert thieves given in the classic itself.

3 In simple language it means that she was footsore. And yet in spite of this she felt for her husband's distress and not her own.

4 Cf. Kuṟaḷvenpā, 55.

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Listen again. Though what is given for safe-

keeping by men of penance be small,¹ it
is bound to
yield many fruitful results. Before the
Cāraṇar preach-
ing *dharma* from the shining slab of
stone, erected by
Śāvakas,² beneath the unchanging shade of
the flowery
asōka, in the town adjoining the Kāveri³
region, stood a
Deva of great power, with beauteous form,
resplendent
like Indra's bow, adorned with garlands of
flowers and
gems, wearing gold ornaments, fit to be
worshipped by
the many invisible gods, but with one of his
hands resem-
bling that of a monkey with black fingers.

‘All the Śāvakas worshipped the Cāraṇar
and wanted
to know the reason for the appearance of

this Dēva, when
the god spoke as follows :

“Once there was a merchant called
Eṭṭi-Sāyalaṇ.⁴ In
his house many would gather who observed
fasting. One
day the chief lady of the house reverentially
received the
foremost among the monks. At the same
time a small
monkey from the village silently entered
the house and
worshipped the feet of the great divine.
Impelled by
hunger, it ate the leavings of the food and
water consumed
by the ascetic, and gazed on him. The wise
person of
steadfast mind became glad at heart and
addressed the

1 For a definition of penance, see
1547.

Civakacintāmaṇi, st

2 The Śavakas were Jaina householders who heard with reverence occasional preachings of dharma from the Cāraṇa, a class of divinities accepted by Hindu tradition.

3 Kāvīrīppūmpākkattuppaṭṭiṇam : Cf. Maṇi., canto xxv. 1.

16.

4

A title given to merchant-princes by the king. Cf. Maṇi., canto iv, l. 58; Perumkatal, Bk. I, ch. 40, l. 116.

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lady of the house, saying, 'Regard this monkey as one of your own sons.'

"The lady agreed to the wise words

of the saint. When the loving monkey died, the lady gave away the property set apart¹ for it, to the assembled Cāraṇar and prayed that it might be absolved from all its sins.² Hence it was born as the only son of Uttaragautta³ at Vāraṇāsi in the middle country.⁴ This son who was celebrated for his beauty, wealth and great wisdom, and noted for his great gifts died in his thirty-second year. Later he attained the form of a Dēvakumāra and has come here with the monkey's hand on one of his arms, as if to announce to all the Śāvakas, "Please note that all my wealth and enjoyments were the outcome of the gifts of her who protected me with grace. Though in my previous birth a monkey, this change of form is due to the gifts of Śāyalaṇ's wife."

‘The pious men of that city who heard these good and wise words of the Cāraṇar and regarded them as God's very 1

In accordance with the

advice given by the monk to regard it as one of her sons, the lady treated it as such, set apart a portion of the family property to the monkey, and on its death, distributed that wealth in charity.

2 The idea is that it may not be born hereafter as an animal.

3 Uttaragautta was the ruling king of Benarés.

4 Benares in the Madhyadēśa. The geographical limits of ancient Madhyadēśa have hardly been settled satisfactorily. Madhyadēśa is frequently mentioned in Vēdic and epic literature as well as in Buddhist literature. Manu makes Prayāg the eastern boundary of the region and by this he seems to exclude the region of Kāśī from the Madhyadēśa. But Kāśī is a part of it according to the authority of the Kāvya-mīmāṃsā. This agrees also with the statement in the Cilappatikāram.

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words, men of penance in that region, the
Śāvakas leading

the life of virtuous householders, the Eṭṭi and
his wife who

gave away gifts (*dāna*)—all of them went
to the last

world of unending bliss.

‘Now that you have heard this account,
accompany this

lady (Kañṇaki) with the flower-decked
hair, without

wasting any more time.’

When Kavunti said this, Mātari became
glad at heart.

She praised the saint and took
leave of her at the time

when the sun was setting. Beside wise
Kañṇaki, with

beautiful, tender breasts, with shoulders
resembling the

bent-bamboo, and with sprouting white
teeth she passed

along, hearing cows bellow aloud in search of their calves. They soon found themselves in the midst of cowherds bearing on their shoulders, lambs, axes and poles with *uri*,¹ and cowherdesses with shining bracelets.

The cowherdess Mātari entered her house with her refugee, after passing through the gateway—with the daily flag flying thereon²—of the fortress walls encircled by a forest of defence and a moat, surmounted by a mechanical bow with self-projecting (arrows),³ a clutching machine⁴

with its black claws, slings, shooting stones, boiling oils,

cauldrons for smelting copper, furnaces for smelting iron,

1 A brief description of cowherds and their womenfolk returning home after nightfall.

2 The flag celebrating daily victory. The interpretation is

appropriate in the light of the *Maturaikkāñci*. 1. 368.

3 Lines 207-16 have been quoted by the celebrated commentator Parimēlaḷakar in commenting on the Kuralvenpā 743.

Here is a detailed description of defences in the fortification.

4 The machine would clutch, like a monkey, those who touched it.

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baskets of stones (for throwing), hooks,¹ chains,² traps shaped like *āṇṭalai* birds,³ iron arms,⁴ sharp poles,⁵ bundles of arrows and of nails, fearful beams, needles to be thrust into the fingers (of enemies), the kingfisher machine which would pluck out the eyes (of the enemy), pig-shaped implements,⁶ bamboo-like machines,⁷ heavy weighted bolts,⁸ wooden

bars thrust across the entrance, clubs, missiles, lances, and many more such things.⁹

1 Hooks were to pull up people scaling fortress walls.

2 Chains were used for strangling.

3 Traps which would fly like the bird *anṭalai* and peck for-

cibly at the crown of the head. This bird is said to possess a

manlike head. (See Kalinga., 'Koll', l. 16.)

4 Iron rods for throwing enemies into the moat if they attempted to cross it.

5 These were poles with pointed heads upon which the

enemy was transfixed and pulled downwards so as to rend his

body into two halves.

6 These were of iron whose splkes would tear out the bowels

of an enemy.

7 These were fastened with iron rods to beat enemies with.

8 The mechanism by which these bolts would drop suddenly on the heads of persons who attempted to open the doorways.

9 This suggests that the abovementioned devices did not exhaust the defences of the fort.

CANTO XVI
KOLAIKKALAK KATAI
OR
THE PLACE OF EXECUTION

THE cowherdess (Mātari) who delightedly took the precious damsel (Kaṇṇakī) under her protection, left her to the other cowherdesses with excellent bangles, in a secure cottage,¹ beautified with red mud, which had a cool

courtyard in front, separated from the
hedge-encircled

residential quarters² of the cowherds who sold
buttermilk.

After giving her a refreshing bath,
Matari addressed

her in words of praise thus: 'O you,
who have come

here with beauty unadorned, as if to
destroy the made-

up beauty³ of Madura ladies decorated
with costly and

glittering jewels of gold, take my daughter
Aiyai, as your

personal attendant. I shall keep watch over
you, O girl

with the fragrant locks of hair, as keenly as
I would over

gold.⁴ O lady, live here with me.' She
continued: 'The

1 Apparently it was the guest-house of the
cowherd com-

munity. The courtyard in front perhaps resembled those invariably found in front of the houses recently excavated in the Indus valley.

2 A description of the residential quarters of the cowherds, their architecture and outward appearance. The simple life of these people is portrayed. Cf. *Perumpāṇā*, l. 163; *Kalittokai*, st. 104; *Akam*, st. 394.

3 A contrast between the natural beauty of *Kaṇṇakī* and the made-up beauty of *Madura* women.

4 The importance and value of gold are emphasized elsewhere also (see *Ācāra*, st. 99).

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lady of great penance (*Kavuntī*) has cured¹ you of the fatigue of your journey and brought you

to a faultless

place; have you any more anxiety for your husband?'²

Turning to her maidens she said:
'Since this lord

(Kōvalan) observes the vows of the
Śavakas,³ get ready

without delay the good vessels needed by
Kaṇṇaki to cook

the daily meal with the aid of her husband's
sister.'⁴ At

this the cowherdesses offered unused
cooking-vessels as

befitting wealthy people and some almost
ripe, round

jack-fruits that never flower,⁵

white-striped cucumbers,

green pomegranates, mangoes, sweet
plantains, rice of

the first quality, and milk from their own
cows,⁶ saying:

'Lady of the round bracelets, please receive
these.'

When Kaṇṇaki had cut the different
 green vegetables
 with a curved knife, her tender fingers
 became reddened,
 her face perspired, her superb eyes
 became bloodshot;
 and she turned aside from the smoking oven.
 Then with
 the aid of the fire of straw lit by Aiyai,
 Kaṇṇaki cooked
 to the best of her ability for her husband.
 When that
 lord had seated himself on a small mat
 dexterously made
 from the white leaves of the palmyra tree
 by a trained

1 Spiritual cure is implied.

2 The word for husband in the text is makaṇ;

a rare use of

the term in this sense. See Maṇi., canto xxi, l. 29.

3 Aṭiyāṛkkunallār makes Kōvalaṇ a Jain and
 interprets the
 passage in the light of the Jain custom of not

eating after night-

fall. It may be a reference to the daily meal.

4 The reference is to Aiyal whom Kaṇṇaki treats as though

she were Kōvalan's sister.

5 Kōlppākal is still eaten in Madura.

6 This list of the food of the Aiyar community indicates their standard of living. rians.

The inference is that they were vegeta- 254

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maid,¹ with her flower-like hands she sprinkled water from an earthen-pot over the feet of her lord.²

Then as if to remove the unconsciousness of Mother

Earth, she sprinkled water on the ground
and making it

smooth with her palms, spread a tender
plantain leaf and

said: 'Here is food, O Lord! Please eat.'
When every-

thing prescribed for those born in the
Vaiśya caste had

been performed as well as possible,³ Aiyai
and her mother

looked at them with pleased eyes and said:
'Is this lord

who eats good food Kṛiṣṇa⁴ with the colour
of the newly-

opened *kāya* flower, nursed by Aśōtai⁵ in
the village of

cowherds? Is this lady with many
shoulder-bracelets the

1 These are some of the Vaiśya practices
and conventions

before taking food.

Cf. Tol., 'Marap.', sūtra 85. The earth is

cleaned by sprinkling it with water so that the surface may be

even and

will not injure the leaf on which the meal is served.
The

plantain-leaf, then, as today, served this purpose. It may be

noted that the āsana or seat was made not of wood but of grass.

2 It was then a practice, as is still observed among certain

communities, to wash the feet before going to meals. Here it is

not clear whether Kaṇṇaki removed the water from Kōvalan's

feet consequent on his washing, or whether she poured water on

his feet and then sprinkled it on her face as an act of purification.

Relics of these practices still linger in this country.

3 'As well as possible' is used by the poet advisedly. It

implies that Kōvalan could not attend to all his daily religious

duties as thoroughly and punctually in a foreign

place as he could
in his own home.

4 Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki are compared
to Kṛiṣṇa and
Nappinnai, the cowherdess whom Kṛiṣṇa took
in wedlock. Here
is a hard fact proving the antiquity of the
Kṛiṣṇa cult, well
known in the early centuries of the Christian era.

5 Yaśoda (Tamil, Aśōḍai) is the wife of
Nanda and foster-
mother of Kṛiṣṇa, the family god of cowherds. (See Bhāga.
Pur., Bk. X, ch. 9, st., 14-20).

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brightest lamp (Pinnai) of our community,
who gave succour to the Lord of the blue
gem, on the banks of the river Yamunā?¹ Our
eyes are not (keen) enough to see this splendid
sight.'

To great Kōvalan who was sitting
fully satisfied

after his meal, were offered [tender
leaves and nuts²

by (Kaṇṇaki) of the black tresses. He
said to her:

‘Come’ and clasping her, continued:

‘Doubting whether

these tender feet of thine would have
strength enough to

walk over the tracts covered with gravel and
stone, and

taking pity on us for having crossed these
painful deserts,

how miserable will our aged parents³ feel?

Is this (our

present condition) illusion? Is it due to cruel
fate?⁴ My

mind is so confused that I know nothing. O

is there hope

for one who has wasted his days in the company
of useless

men and debauchees, among groups of
scandal-mongers
indulging in boisterous laughter, ever
hankering after
sinful deeds, neglecting the good words
spoken by wise
men? I have not been dutiful to my aged
parents. I

1 The Yamuna is the river where Kṛiṣṇa sported with the
cowherdresses. This is a reference to the aquatic (jalakṛiḍa) in-
dulged in by Kṛiṣṇa in the course of his rāsakṛiḍa (ibid., ch. 30-
34): see also Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch. 13.

2 Note the reference to the use of betels
and nuts after
food. The reader may profitably compare this
with ll. 240-3 of canto xxviii of the Maṇimēkalai,
where Maṇimēkalai entertains
Aravaṇaṭikaḷ to dinner. This proves that even
Bhikṣus took be-
tels, a custom forbidden by Hindu law; also that camphor took
the place of chuṇam. Cf. Jātakas, Vol. I, pp. 132 and 152. See
also Tolk., 'Eṭal', sūtra 36, commentary by Iḷampūraṇar.

3 The expression yemmutukuravar in this
line means 'our
parents' and consequently the reference is to the

parents of both

Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalan.

4 Cf. Kuralvenpā 1311.

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have also disgraced thee who art young in years, but old in wisdom. I never thought that I was doing wrong. Even though I asked thee not to leave our great city for this place,¹ thou camest with me. What a thing thou didst!

Kaṇṇaki rejoined: 'Though I could not give charity to observers of *dharma*,² or honour Brahmanas, receive saints and ascetics, or entertain guests as befits our great family, I hid from your revered mother and your highly reputed and honourable father, much esteemed by the king, my sorrow at not having you before me; but they knew it and were full of affection for me and spoke loving words. In spite of my pretended smile, my

emaciated body made them know my inner anxiety at which they were highly grieved. Though you deviated from the right path, because I kept to the path of rectitude, I volunteered to come along with you.'

Kōvalaṇ said : 'O thou who hast given up thy parents and relations, menial servants, nurse-maids³ and female-attendants, and taken as thy great aids modesty, credulity, good conduct, and chastity,⁴ hast rid me of my troubles by accompanying me.

1 The reference is to Pukār and Madura.

2 The duties of a true householder are given.

Cf. Kuraḷ, ch. 8.

Parimēlaḷakar quotes ll. 71-3 in his commentary.

It may be noted in passing that these duties correspond to the injunctions of Hindu law.

Chaste women could not give charity in the absence of their husbands.

3 Aṭiyor-pāṅku. Five are distinguished : one who plays with a child, one who feeds it, one who lulls it to sleep, one who teaches it to speak,

and its foster-mother. See Cīvakacintāmaṇi, st. 363 and commentary.

4 These four attributes took the place of parents, maidservants, companions

and associates. The Pingalandai Nighaṇṭu

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‘O purest gold, creeper, girl with fragrant curls of hair ! ‘O embodiment of modesty, light of the vast world !

‘O tender offshoot of chastity, storehouse of virtues !

‘I shall go with one of the anklets that adorn thy

beautiful feet and return after exchanging it for money.

Till then do not lose heart.’

Closely embracing his lady-love of the
long black eyes,

feeling much for her being lonely and
without relations,

and restraining the tears rising in his eyes
because of his

mental anxiety, he left the home of
the cowherds

and wearily walked along the street,
without knowing

—because his caste men were not aware
of it—that

the humped bull¹ coming in front of him
indicated a bad

omen, passed beyond the *tāterumaṇṇam*;
then passing

through the streets of courtesans, he
reached the bazaar.

There he saw a goldsmith who with a coat
on, was walk-

ing at some distance,² pincers in hand,
followed by a

hundred goldsmiths famous for their delicate workmanship

and exquisite handiwork in jewellery;⁸ and thinking within

speaks of nārkuṇam as four masculine qualities and four feminine qualities.

1 Superstition of the Āyar in observing bad and good omens. What was a superstition for one community was not for another. Valsyas did not consider a humped bull coming in front a bad omen, but cowherds did.
low

2 Arumpatavuraiaṅṅiyar remarks, that being a member of a caste, he kept himself at a respectable distance from the members of higher castes. But the expression may be interpreted

as referring to the particular gait of the goldsmith which distin-

guished him from others of his class.

3 Kaṇṇūlvṅṅaiṅṅar and nuṇṇūlvṅṅalkkollar are interpreted by Aṭṭiyarkkunallar as skilled in 'melting gold' and 'making beautiful

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himself that this must be the state goldsmith¹
of the much-

celebrated Pāṇṭyan, Kōvalan asked him, 'Can
estimate the price of an ornament for an ankle,

you please
suitable for

the queen of the protecting king?

The goldsmith who resembled
Yama's messenger

replied (as if) reverentially, 'Though I am ignorant about
that,' I can make crowns and other ornaments required
by kings.' Thereupon Kōvalan opened the bundle which
contained the invaluable anklet. The goldsmith, a
habitual liar, minutely examined the workmanship of the
artistic anklet, embossed with shining gold
and containing

inside the best rubies and diamonds

carved with serried

depressions, and said, 'This anklet can be demanded by

none other than the great queen
(Kōpperuntēvi). I shall

go now and inform the victorious king
about this. Till

I return, please stay here near my little hut.'

Then Kōvalan went to the
*tēvakōṭṭam*² near that

lowly man's house, and when he had
entered a small

chamber, the hard-hearted thief
(goldsmith) said to

himself, 'Before the fact of my having
stolen the anklet

is publicly known,⁴ I will accuse this
stranger from

another land of the theft to the king',
and walked on
(to the palace).

1 The office of state goldsmith was

an institution in ancient

India. See Kaut. Artha., Bk. II, § 13.

2 Note the dishonesty of the goldsmith,
and the price he
pays for it in the end.

3 Tēvakōṭṭam may refer to a small shrine
erected in front
of the goldsmith's shop.

4 From this it would appear that the
goldsmith had very
recently robbed the queen of her anklet, and this
known to the public.
fact was not yet

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There the great queen imagining that the
king's heart
had been won by the graceful appearance of
the Madura

dancing-girls who sang different songs, and displayed the

wealth of their instrumental music in their dances, hid her

jealousy in a love-quarrel; and feigning a headache left

him. When his minister and councillors¹ went away, the

king repaired to the great queen's chamber attended by

female servants with long glowing eyes.

The goldsmith who saw the king at the last entrance

of the guarded gateway prostrated himself before him, and

praising him in several ways, said : 'The thief who used

neither crow-bar nor auger,² but relied on the strength of

sleep-giving incantations to put to sleep the watchmen at

the gate before stealing the palace anklet,³ is

now staying

in my lowly little hut hiding himself from
the watchmen
of this bustling city.'

Because that was the moment of the
ripening of past

karmā, the wearer of the garland of margosa⁴
flowers (the

king) without any inquiry, sent for the city
watchmen and

ordered: 'Now,
if you find the foot-ornament of my con-
sort resembling the flower-garland in the
possession of an
expert thief, kill him,⁵
and bring the anklet here.'

At this command of the king, the
villainous goldsmith,

glad at heart, said to himself, 'I have
achieved what I

1 The term used in the text is

mantiraśśuṅgam.

2 Crowbars and boring sticks were some of the instruments

of robbers. Note also the belief in incantations.

3 Kōll is a technical term for the palace.

4 The Pāṇṭyan king wore a margosa garland.

5 This is a case of punishment without judicial trial, con-

trary to the accepted practice. This was resorted to by the king

in order to reconcile his queen.

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wished,' and approaching Kōvalan, whose cruel fate had

enmeshed him in its close net, said (pointing to the men),

'These have come here to see the anklet at the bidding

of the king, possessor of the victorious army.' This false goldsmith convincingly explained to them all the things relating to the workmanship of the anklet. But the valiant (executioners) observed : 'The appearance and features of this man do not show him to be deserving of execution.'¹

The wily goldsmith smiled scornfully at them, and set forth his reasons :² '*Mantra, daiva, drugs, omen, trickery, place, time and instrument are the eight aids employed by low persons pursuing the ignoble profession of thieves. If you are deceived by this man's drugs, you will expose yourselves to the great wrath of our renowned king. If*

thieves utter a *mantra* and meditate upon it, they can become invisible like the sons of gods.³

‘If they perform the feat of making gods appear before them, they can show in their hands the stolen objects and yet walk safely away. By stupefying us with their drugs they can make us sit still in the same place. Unless a good omen presents itself they do not steal, however valuable a thing, even if it easily falls into their hands. If

1 The first impression of the executioners was that *Koḷalan* was innocent.

2 The eight aids employed by a thief. Dr Swaminatha Aliyar shows in a footnote that *kaḷavunūl* (the science of theft) was the *śtēyaśāstra* attributed to *Karṇisuta*, the teacher of *Kaca*.

3 The term in the text *Indirakumarar*, literally means sons of Indra. *Aṭiyārkunallar* interprets *Indirar* as *dēvar*. Therefore the expression may

mean sons of gods. The commentator
points to another interpretation: Antarakumarar.

KOLAIKKALAK KATAI

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they resort to magic,¹ they can deprive even
Indra of the
garland on his breast.

‘If they decide upon the place whence
they will to steal
a particular object, who could discover them
at that place?

If they decide upon the time and get
possession of the
object, even the gods could not deprive
them of it. If

they steal valuables by employing their tools,
who, in this
wide world, could find them out? To
them, there is—

neither day nor night. If you would listen
to the science
of theft,² there is no end to it.

‘Once, a certain thief stayed at the palace
gate like an
ambassador (all the day) and when it grew
dark, disguised
as a woman, he entered without any
hesitation, in the
shadow cast by the lamp, and in an instant
removed the
garland of diamonds sparkling like the
sun’s rays³ from
the Crown Prince.⁴ The awakened
(prince) found it
missing from his shoulders and drew his
sword from its
sheath, which the thief clasped and warded
off all the blows
with it. Tired of this, the prince attempted a
hand-to-hand
fight, but the thief, expert in his science,
escaped after

1 Tantara-karaṇam, in the text refers

to one of the eight

aids mentioned in the work. According to the Arumpatavural,

it is a reference to Karavaṭaśāstram itself.

2 The reference here is certainly to

Karavaṭanūl (Karaviṭam)

or Karvaṭa by Mūladēva. Can it be a reference to the Khara-

paṭṭa of Kaṇṭalya? See T. Ganapati Sastri's edition of the Artha-

śāstra, Vol II, p. 156, ll. 5-6; also J. J. Meyer, Das Altindische

Buch, p. 953.

3 The implication is that the brilliance of the diamonds was

such that they served as the light with which the thief was able to

remove them.

4 The reigning Pāṇṭyan king was Neṭuṇṇellayan. His younger

brother's garland was stolen by a skilled thief.

making the prince attack a jewelled pillar. If anyone of you has seen him, show him to us. Is there any on this earth who is equal to this thief?’

Among those who heard this murderous goldsmith, a young executioner with a lance in his hands spoke: ‘Once on a dark night in the middle of the rainy season, when all the village was deep in sleep there appeared a thief,¹ with a chisel used for splitting the earth, clothed in blue robes, desirous of jewels, fierce like a tiger. I unsheathed my sword, but he plucked it from my hands and could not afterwards be seen anywhere. Rare indeed are the deeds of thieves. Failure to carry out the king’s orders will cause trouble to us. O men of martial valour, say what is to be done.’

At this, an unlettered person, in a fit of drunkenness, hurled his well-polished sword from his hand (upon Kōvalan), cutting him across. The blood that gushed forth from the

wound spread over Mother Earth, who felt extreme agony. Vanquished by his pre-destined fate, Kōvalan fell, causing the Pāṇṭyan sceptre to become crooked.

NĒRISAI VENPĀ

Because of the injustice done to Kaṇṇaki's husband, the never-crooked sceptre of the Pāṇṭyan, became crooked, —a result of pre-ordained fate. Good and bad actions yield their results unfailingly. Therefore always perform righteous deeds.

1 See Maturaikkāṇṭi, II. 639-42. Another instance of a thief and thieving is furnished.

CANTO XVII

ACCIYAR KURAVAI

OR

THE DANCE OF THE COWHERDESSES

‘THE morning drum will soon be heard in the palace

of the Pāṇṭyan, famous for his garlanded white umbrella.

He is acknowledged ruler of the whole earth by all the

kings of Jambūdvīpa, with its cool groves, and even by

the Cōla and Cera who have carved their Tiger¹ and

Bow² marks side by side with the Fish³ carved by the

Pāṇṭyan himself on the Himalayan crests. It is our turn

to supply ghee⁴, said the elderly lady (Matari)⁴ calling to

her daughter Aiyai, who came out with the churning stick and rope.

URAIPPĀṬṬUMATAI

Then she said :

‘Alas! The milk in the pot has not curdled. The beautiful eyes of the big humped bulls are full of tears; some calamity

is happening.

1 The emblem of the Cōla monarch.

2 The ensign of the Cēra.

3 The emblem of the Pāṇṭya monarch. This

shows that all the three Tamil kings led Himalayan expeditions.

4 The cowherds evidently supplied the palace with ghee by turn. A similar custom is referred to in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Bk. V, ch 15, st. 22. It appears that Kamsā, king of Mathurā, was supplied with milk, and ghee by the cowherds of the Vraja or Gokula. In sending Akrūra to fetch Kṛiṣṇa and his brother Rama, Kamsā asked Akrūra to tell the cowherds to speed up the supply of milk and ghee to the palace.

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‘The fragrant butter in the *urī*¹ does not melt. The lambs do not frisk about; some calamity is happening.

‘Herds of cows with their four-nippled udders are shuddering and bellowing in fear; the big bells (tied to their necks) fall down. O! Some calamity is happening.’²

THAT WHICH IS PROGNOSTICATIVE (KARUPPAM)

The milk in the pot not curdling, the
beautiful eyes of
the humped bulls being filled with tears, the
butter in the
uri not melting, the lambs lying without
frisking, and the
big bells falling down to the earth—all these
signs portend
some coming evil. Looking at her daughter
she (Mātari)
said: 'Do not feel perturbed. To alleviate
the grief of
our cattle, we shall dance the *kuravai*¹ in
the presence of
Kaṇṇaki, that jewel among the damsels of
the earth.

1 A pot suspended in a network of rope or
iron.

2 The evil portents which point to an
impending calamity

according to the belief of the cowherds.

3 After enumerating again the evil portents, the cowherdess told her daughter the remedy to avert the impending calamity.

The remedy was *kuravai* (*rāsakṛīḍa*) the origin of which is traced

back to Lord Kṛṣṇa and his spouse Nappinnai. In commenting on the term *rāsa* occurring in Viṣṇu Purāṇa (Bk. V, ch. 13, pp. 532-5), H. H. Wilson, the translator, notes the following.

'The *rāsa* dance is a dance in which men and women hold each other's hands and go round in a circle, singing airs varying in melody and tune.' According to Bharata the number of persons should not exceed sixtyfour. There is a reference to the *rāsa-maṇḍala* in the *Brahmavaivartta Purāṇa* where Rādhā is accompanied by thirty-six Gōpis, many inferior personages.

each of the latter being attended by
In the *Brahmavaivartta* the *maṇḍala*

is not a ring of dancers but a circle of definite space within Kṛiṣṇa, Rādhā, and the Gopis diverted themselves.

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Among the many boyhood games¹ played by Māyavaṇ and his elder brother Balarāma in the *erumaṇram* of the *Āyar-pāṭi*,² the *kuravai* was one. It was played by Māyavaṇ with Pinnai of the long lance-like eyes.

REHEARSAL (KOḸU)³

1. 'This sweet lady with the garland of flowers loves him who can jump upon the black bull undaunted by its rage,' she said, pointing to a certain damsel.

1 Here is a distinct reference to a number of dramatic performances by the boy Kṛiṣṇa with Balarāma and Nappinnai. The *kuravai* was one such

performance. The term nāṭakam cannot be taken in its absolute sense as a dramatic composition.

2 Āyar-pāṭi = the quarters of the cowherds; Gokulam is perhaps its Sanskrit equivalent. Eruṁanṅam or Tāteruṁanṅam is the public place of the Āyar. It was an open courtyard with a raised platform.

3 It was a custom in the cowherd community for young girls, until they were married, to select their own bulls from the common stall, and to tend them. The bulls would then be let loose, and whichever young cowherd could successfully bring the beast under control in an open contest, was deemed the proper life-partner for the girl.

Apparently it was one of the ancient wedding customs among the Āyar. This custom also can be traced to their family deity Kṛiṣṇa, who, tradition affirms, curbed the fury of seven bulls coloured black, white, and brown, and married the girls who were tending them. The Ālvārs, who flourished several centuries after the composition of the Cilappati-kāram, also attribute this incident to Kṛiṣṇa. (See Dikshitar's article on 'Kṛiṣṇa in Tamil Literature' in Indian Culture, Vol. IV, No. 3, Calcutta, 1937.) One can see a remnant of this

insti- tuti- on surviving today in the form of mimic
shows on the Māṭṭu-

Poṅkal day following Poṅkal festival every year, in the
January. Selected bulls are let loose in the villages

middle of

with new

towels and other things tied to their necks or horns.

Many people of all castes come from neighbouring
villages and take part in the

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2.

‘The shoulders of this girl with golden brace
lets become the possession of him, who can
suppress the
bull with red spots¹ on its forehead.

3. ‘This girl with her beautiful hair
decked with jasmine flowers is the recognized
bride for him who can mount that strong young
bull.

4. ‘The shoulders of this creeper-like
damsel will.

be owned by him who can crush the bull with
the small
white spots.

5. 'The soft breasts of this
creeper-like girl are the possession of him who can
overcome the bull with the golden spots.

6. 'This damsel with her beauteous
hair decked
with *konrai* flowers, become the wife of
him who can
mount that victorious young bull.

7. 'This girl resembling burgeoning
flowers will
be of right his, who can control the milk-white
bull.'

STRINGENDO

(EṬUTTUKKĀṬṬU)²

(Then the elderly Mātari proceeded to
allocate their places in the dance) saying to her

daughter that these seven

contest to bring the animal under
all connexion with marriage.

control.

But now it has lost

1 Cf. Kalittokai, 'Mullai', ch. 4,

st. 65

The expression used is *nerricclvalai*.

in this connexion.

2 The seven girls selected for the kuravai dance were those who tended bulls in their cattle-stalls for the sake of getting suitable husbands. The song sung stated who was for whom. In this particular performance the seven maidens represented the seven strings of the yāl in their order and were named after each respective string.

the cattle stall and nourished them.

She made them stand in the traditional order (accord-

ing to the arrangement of the seven strings in the *yāl*) and

gave them names appropriate to their acting.¹ Beginning

from the western end, the regular places (of these girls)

were *kural*, *tuttam*, *kaikkīlai*, *uḷai*, *iḷi*, *viḷari* and *tāram*.

These are the names which were given by the fragrant

haired lady (Mātari).

She (who stood at the place) of the *kural* was named

Mayavaṇ. She (who stood at the place) of *iḷi* was called

(by the name of) the victorious Balarama. She (who

stood at the place) of *tuttam* represented the cowherdess

Pinnai. The others were named in the order described above.²

Pinnal and *tāram* were then joined to Māyavaṇ; *uḷai*

and *viḷari* joined the white Balarama.

Kaikkilai stood to

the left of Pinnai. The good *viḷari* stood to the right of

tāram (*muttai*, also *munṭai*).

Among them,

She who garlanded Māyavaṇ with the luxurious *tulasī*

garland, would perform the faultless *kuravai* dance. Is

pinṇal of bangled arms so beautiful that He who had won

great reputation by measuring the universe, would not

look at Lakṣhmī dwelling in his own breast?

Ha! Ha!

So said Mātari (in great glee).

1 This is called *vaṭṭappālai*. For a detailed

description see

Abraham Pandithar's Karuṇāmṛtasāgaram.

2 Kalkkīlai, uḷai, vīḷari, and tāram. High and low pitched

strings are called tāra and maṇḍara. See Viṣṇu ch. 13, st. 6.

Purāṇa, Bk. V,

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THE DANCE (KUTTULPATUTAL)

They then¹ stood evenly in the form of a circle, and clasping their fingers in the *karkaṭaka* pose,² began the dance in that posture. In the beginning the girl representing the *kural* looked at her neighbour the *tuttam* and said, 'We shall sing with the sweet *paṇ* called *mullai*, in honour of Him who broke the *kurunta*³ tree in an extensive upland (of the Gōkula).'

Thus saying, (the damsel representing) the *kural* began to sing in a low tone, (the damsel representing) the *īḷi* to sing in a level tone, and (the damsel representing) the *tuttam* to sing in a high tone. The low singer representing *vīḷari* in her low pitch followed the tone of her ally representing the *tuttam*.

THE SONG (PĀṬṬU)

1. O friend! If Māyavan (Lord Kṛṣṇa), who
used a calf as a
stick to knock down (*vila*) fruits,⁴ comes
here among our cattle, shall we not hear
Him playing on
his fine *konrai* flute?⁵

--

1

What follows is a description of the actual dance.

2 The karkaṭaka pose was made by each dancer bending her

middle finger and ring finger in front, and
joining the other two

with the respective two fingers of the maid next
to her, and so on.

the big finger being excepted. In that
posture each pair of

clasped hands resembled a crab (karkaṭa).

3 The kurunta tree is a species of wild
lime (Atalantla).

This was one of the heroic exploits attributed to

Kṛiṣṇa. It is

said that a demon stood in the form of a tree to deceive and kill

Kṛiṣṇa. This was perceived by the god who killed the demon

by uprooting the tree.

4 Balakṛiḍa of Kṛiṣṇa;

Cf. Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 18, st.

12-15.

5 Konral, āmpal and mullal are referred to. Five kinds of flutes are said to have been in existence.

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2. O friend! If Māyavaṇ, who churned the ocean

with a serpent as his rope, comes here among our cattle,

shall we not hear Him playing on his fine

āmpal flute ?

3. O friend! If Māyavaṇ, who
broke the *kurunta*

tree¹ in our extensive uplands comes
during the day among
our cattle,

shall we not hear him playing on his fine *mullai*
flute?

We shall sing of the charming
beauty of Pinnai as

she danced with her husband on
the banks of the
Yamunā.²

1. 'How can we describe the
form of Him who

hid the clothes of the slender-waisted
lady³ whose figure

was bent to the point of breaking? Or
how can we describe

the face of the handsome lady who was
(visibly) touched

by the regretful look of Him who hid her

clothes? 4

2. 'How can we describe the
perfection of her

who stole the heart of her husband,
who deceived all in

the water-sports of the Yamunā? How
can we describe

the form of Him who stole away the
charm and the bangles

of her, who had captivated him?

3.

'How can we describe the face of the lady who
hid it in her hands when she lost her
clothes and bangles?

Or how can we describe the beauty
of him who was pained

by the distress of her who hid her face in
her hands?'

1 Cf. the Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch.

2 Tamil, Tolunāl.

upon the first string.

Our Pinnai, with the nape of her neck bent, stood on the right of Māyavan bright as the neck of a peacock, and on the left of his elder brother whose body was white as a flower-stalk. He who plays upon the first string, beating time to her strain, is Nārada, the foremost chorister.

IN PRAISE OF THE DANCERS (ĀṬUNARPPUKALTAL)

O splendid was the *kuravai* dance praised by Aśōtai
and danced in the *tāterumanram* by Māyavan¹,
his elder
brother, and Pinnai of the striped bracelet,
which disarranged the flower wreaths on the
curly heads of the young cowherdesses, who
with measured tread were beating
time² with their bangled hands.

1 The reference is to the legend of
Krishṇa having hld the
sun with His discus.

2 During the dance of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma it is said that sage Nārada, the first vīṇa master of the world, was beating time. He was a Vēdic bard in the sense that a Śikṣā is attributed to him. There is now extant the Nārada-Śikṣā, a treatise on Vēdic music (published in the Benares Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series) The idea is that the girl who represented Nārada, followed Pīṇai in her song and dance.

3 Māyavaṇ can be translated literally as the Great Dis-sembler.

4 The plain meaning runs thus: 'To the movement of the feet of the principal figures Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Pīṇai, the

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'O friends!'

Mātari said, 'All of us shall sing the song of *uḷvari*

and praise the god, riding upon the Grauḍa bird. Let us praise him!'

THE SONG OF UḷVARI

1. On the breast of the Pāṇṭya_n king¹
can be seen

a garland painted with Potiyil
sandal-paste,² a string
garland of pearls, and a jewelled garland
of the king of
gods.

It is said that he who wears the
garland of the king
of gods³ is He who tended the cattle in
the Gōkulam

(adjoining) the flourishing Dvārakā⁴, and
rent asunder

the *kurunta* tree.⁵

cowherdesses beat time during the dance. By
so doing these

maidens became wearied in the performance,
but not the chief
dancers.⁷

1 Note that the poet, who was a Cēra
prince, gives pro-
minence to the Pāṇṭya and Cōla and relegates

his own king to

third place, demonstrating that he is impartial in his treatment of

the subject. The place of honour given to the Pāṇṭyaṇ may also

be due to the fact that the poet is now dealing with the 'Maturaik-kāṇṭam'.

2 This means that sandal-paste was painted on his breast to look like a garland.

3 For the legend see Tiruvīḷaiyāṭal Purāṇam, §44.

4 Dvārakā was the capital of the ancient Yādava kingdom,

over which Krishṇa ruled. It may be noted that Mathurā was

originally the capital, and it was under Krishṇa's guidance that

the transference of the capital was effected. See Vishṇu Purāṇa,

Bk. V, ch. 23.

5 This and the following two stanzas

represent the three

kings as Viṣṇu and thus attribute divinity to the ruling chieftains.

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2. King Vaṇavan (the Cōla)¹ the ruler of fortified Pukār carved the Tiger on the golden crests of the Himalayas and ruled the earth.

It is said that king Vaṇavan, the ruler of fortified Pukār, holds a golden discus² as a weapon of war.

3. The Cēra, king of kings, and the ruler ^o flourishing Vañci, crossed the ocean and destroyed the never-ageing *kaṭampa* tree.³

It is said of this Cēra, king of kings, and ruler of flourishing Vañci,⁴ that he is Viṣṇu himself who swung His hill-like shoulders and

churned the ocean.⁵

The divine power of kings was accepted as a matter of course in ancient India.

1 The reference seems to be to the famous Karikala. See Introduction, p. 22.

2

Vishṇu is said to wield a discus as a weapon of war. The usual weapons attributed to him are śankha, cakra and gada.

3 From Akam., st. 199, we see that Nannan was the head of the Kaṭampa clan and being powerful took possession of some Cēra territory and Narmuṭiccēral had to discomfit him and take back the lost possessions. It also transpires that chiefs who held island kingdoms thought that they were unassailable. One such was the kingdom of the Kaṭampas. It would appear that Ceṇ-kuṭṭuvan inflicted a crushing defeat on them and earned the title kaṭal-pirakōṭṭiya (see Patir., patikam 4 and 5).

4 The Cēra capital, identified with Karuvār. Contra K. G.

Sesha Aiyar, in the J. I. H., Vol. XII, pp.

184-214, 1933. See

also his Cera Kings of the Caṅkam Period (1937),
ch. 5.

5 For this legend see Bhāga, Pur., Bk.
VIII, ch. 5, st.

11 ff.

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MUNNILAIPPARAVAL

OR
DIRECT PRAISE

1. O sea-hued god! Once, in days
gone by, you

churned the bowels of the sea,¹ using the
northern moun-

tain² for your churning stick and Vāsuki³
for your rope.

O Lord with the lotus in your navel,⁴ your
hands which

once did churn were fastened with the

churning rope of

Asōtai.⁵ Is that your *māyā*?⁶ O,
deceptive indeed is
your work!

2. O wearer of the luxurious
tulasī garland!

When the host of the Dēvas praised you
reverentially as
the One Supreme Being,⁷ you, who could
never know

hunger, ate up the whole universe. Your
mouth which
swallowed thus (the whole universe), ate by
stealth the

butter from the pot in the *urī*.⁸ Is it your
māyā? Decep-
tive indeed is your work!

1. Bhaga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 9, st. 14-20.

2. Mantarakīrī. This finds mention in all
Purāṇas.

3. Vāsukī is the great serpent which was used

as the rope in

the mythical churning of the ocean.

4 Sanskrit, Padmanābha.

5 Yaśodā fastened baby Kṛṣṇa with the rope as a punishment for stealing butter from other houses. (See Viṣṇu Purāṇa., Bk V., ch. 6).

6 Māyā is a subtle word that means deception or illusion.

It is a term of much philosophical significance.

7 Aṭṭyārkunallār conjectures that it may be a reference to

the god accepted by the followers of all the six systems of philosophy.

8 See for this legend the Bhāga. Pur., Bk. VIII, ch. 29-31.

3. O Tirumāl! When the assembled host of Dēvas worshipped and praised you, you overstepped the three worlds¹ with your two lotus feet, to drive away darkness.² O Narasimha! Destroyer of enemies!³ Yet those feet of yours which thus overstepped, went as the messengers of the five Pāṇṭavas.⁴ Is this your *māyā*? Deceptive indeed is your work!

PAṬARKKAIPPARAVAL

OR

INDIRECT PRAISE

1. Vain are the ears which do not hear the glory of the doughty champion, who measured the three worlds

with His two feet and yet found them too small; who penetrated with His younger brother⁵ into the wild jungle to the reddening of His lotus-feet; who pulled down in battle the Sō fortress,⁶ and deprived

ancient Lankā of its

1 The reference is to the Trivikrama avatār of Viṣṇu. See

Bhāga. Pur., Bk. VIII, ch. 20-21. A huge figure representing the

incarnation is found in the Ulakaṭantaperumāl-koil, Conjeevaram.

2 In other words 'spreading divine light everywhere.'

3 Narasimha, as an incarnation of Viṣṇu, half-man and

half-lion, to kill the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu.

4 See Mhb., 'Udyōga', ch. 90-91.

5 Rāma's conquest of Ceylon with his brother. See the

Rāmāyaṇa.

6 The Śō fortress or the Śōṇapura of Bāṇa was pulled down

and its inmates put to death. This interpretation

cannot fit in
here. Śo may mean the great and wonderful
fortress and Śo aran
is an attribute of the citadel of Lankā.

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protection.¹ Vain are the ears which do not
hear² the glory of Tirumāl.

2. Vain are the eyes which do not see
the dark-hued Lord, the great God, the
Māyavan (Dissembler), the God in the
blossomed lotus of whose navel appeared all the
great worlds, and who has red eyes, red feet,
red hands, and red lips.³ Vain are the eyes
of those who while looking (upon the Lord) must
wink.⁴

3. Vain is the tongue that

will not praise Him who triumphed over the deceit of the foolish schemer Kamsā,⁵ and who went as the messenger of the five Pāṇṭavās to the Hundred (Kauravas), praised (by the Dēvas) in all four directions, to the accompaniment of Vedic chanting.⁶ Vain is the tongue which does not say 'Nārāyaṇa'.

'May the deity celebrated in the *kuravai* dance in which we were now engaged alleviate the distress which has befallen our cattle! May the drumstick of the drum of our Pāṇṭyan with the shoulder-ornaments, who broke

1 Rāma's conquest of Ceylon with his brother. See the

Rāmāyaṇa, 'Yuddha.'

2 This is the Harikathāśravaṇam so much stressed in the

Bhāga. Pur.

3 His form was dark except for his eyes, feet, hands, and lips which were reddish.

4 Winking eyes are the eyes of ordinary mortals. Thus this sight can be enjoyed only by gods whose eyes are said not to wink.

5 For the many villainous deeds of Kamsa, see the Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 36; also the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch. 20.

6 He was himself a Vēda Purusa and hence the Vēdas in mortal form followed Him.

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the crown of Indra,¹ whose weapon is the victorious thunder, strike terror among his enemies and every day proclaim his victory!

1 See the Tiruvīḷālyāṭalpurāṇam, § 44. It must be noted that the poet attributes the heroic exploits of an ancestor of the Pāṇṭyan king to the ruling monarch. to a distinguished line of kings.

The idea is that he belongs

CANTO XVIII

TUNPA MALAI
OR

THE GARLAND OF SORROW

THERE the elderly cowherdess of dynamic
charm¹ went to
bathe and to worship with flowers, incense,
sandal-paste,
and garlands, Neṭumāl² on the bank of the
deep Vaikai.

Towards the close of the *kuravai* dance
someone³ who had
heard a cry in the city came back in haste.

She said nothing; but stood without
opening her
mouth to Kaṇṇaki, who said :

‘O! friend, speak, speak out.

‘I do not see my husband.

My mind is in a flutter.

The air expelled from my lungs surpasses the
air (driven

into the fire) from bellows. If the air
expelled from my

1 The expression in the text *āṭiya cāyalāḥ*.
While the Arum-

patavurai sees in *śāyalāḥ* a reference to *Aiyal*.
Aṭiyārkunallār

interprets it as some other lady. Both do not seem
to fit.

2 *Śrī Iruntavaḷamuḍalyār* or *Antaravānatterumān*. The
offerings to the god consisted of flowers, sandal-paste, etc. In
India the end of the most important festivals
and rituals was

marked by a sacred bath, the *avabhṛtasnānam* of
Sanskrit litera-

ture. See *Śentamīl*, Vol. VIII, p. 183 f.

3

This may refer to *Aiyal* or any other lady.

It is here

taken as a reference to Alyai, from the fact that
Kannaki address-

ses her as

infer that

friend and companion later on. From this we
only Alyai's mother Mātari went to the river

have to

and the

temple there, while Alyai remained at home. Or, Mātari who went
to the river, heard the news and returned post-haste.

lungs surpasses the air from bellows, will you not
what is being said in city?¹ Long live you, friend !

tell me

‘Even during daytime a fit of shivering² takes hold of me. Not seeing my beloved, my heart is restless with grief. As my mind is restless with grief at not seeing my beloved, tell me what it is that people said. Bless you, my friend.

‘I seek your aid, friend! I do not see my lord returning. I scent some danger; my mind faints. As my mind faints at something hidden from me, I pray you, my friend, tell me, what it is that they (*eñcalār*)³ said (in the city).

She replied :

‘O! Saying that he was the thief who silently stole the glittering anklet from the palace, the king’s residence—that he was the thief who silently stole—the men who wore jingling anklets executed him.’

Hearing this, Kaṇṇaki sprang up in rage and then fell down on the earth, as if the rising moon had fallen with the clouds on the wide earth.⁴ She wept making her red eyes redder. She cried out, ‘O! Where are you, my dear husband? Ah! Ah!’, and fell down in a swoon.

(Recovering, she again continued to rave)

1 *Ētllār* is the term for people of the same

neighbourhood.

2 Generated by extreme fear.

3 Eñcalār is the term for 'others',
'strangers'. The citizens
of this place were strangers
to Kaṇṇaki who had only arrived that
day.

4 The moon is compared to Kaṇṇaki's face
and the clouds
to locks of her hair,

TUNPA MALAI

'Like the distressed women who keep
difficult vows after their loving husbands have

been burnt in fire,¹ am I to perish in misery,
because I have lost my loving husband
through the fault of the king censured by
his subjects?

‘Like the distressed women who, after
losing their husbands who had worn fragrant
garlands on their broad chests, go in despair to
many places of pilgrimage² and bathe therein,
am I to perish in anguish, O foolish goddess of
Dharma,³ through the fault of the king
wielding the sceptre of injustice?

‘Like the afflicted women, who are ever
plunged into
hard vows of widowhood after their
beloved husbands
have fallen a prey to the funeral fire, am I
to pine away
in grief, losing fame in this life also, through
the wrong
committed by the Pāṇṭyan, whose sceptre
swerved from

the righteous path?

1 It transpires from this that cremation and not burial was customary and that widows led a life of fasting and arduous penance. They cared no more for their mortal bodies.

2 Even today Hindu widows go on pilgrimages after the decease of their husbands to bathe in the waters of holy rivers and pools in order to obtain final salvation. Bathing in tirthas and fasting are generally practised by women after the death of their husbands. It may be noted that the practice of suttee was not the rule but only the exception. We may call attention here to a statement of the Maṇimākalai, canto ii, ll. 42-50, where three classes of women are distinguished.

3 According to Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar, the term aṇam stands here for the deity of righteousness or the

Goddess of

Dharma. Kannaki addresses the deity as a foolish Goddess for

She was a witness of the king's injustice towards her innocent

husband. This suggests the belief that Fate is more powerful than

Gods, and its laws cannot be transgressed.

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ĀLAPPATIKĀRAM

‘O! Look at me.

‘Hear my words, ¹

O all you good damsels of the cow-herd community who have gathered here, and have with foresight, engaged yourselves in the *kuravai*!² Hear my words! Hear, all of you cowherd girls!

‘O, Lord of the hot rays!³ You who are a witness for all the deeds of this seagirt world, speak! Is my husband a thief?’

Then was heard a voice from the welkin :
‘He is not a thief, O, lady of carp-like eyes!

'This city will be consumed by blazing flames.'

1 ll. 47-53 are quoted by Nacclnārkkṇiyar in commenting on Tolkaḥ, 'Ceyyul', sūtra 149.

2 Kāṇṇaki pays a tribute to the cowherdesses who anticipated a calamity and danced the kuravai to avert it.

3 The reference is to the Sun-god. Kāṇṇaki who had already addressed the Dharmadēvatā now appealed to the Sun.

According to tradition the Sun is supposed to be the unfailing witness of all acts and deeds. She demanded from the Sun-god an answer to her question: 'Is my husband a thief?' The Sun

immediately replied: 'No'. In ancient times the sun cult was

universal. Greece and Rome took to the worship of the sun, and Plato in the Republic idealizes the Sun as 'the author of all light and life in the material world'. A great part of the oldest Vedic rituals are permeated with the worship of the sun implicitly as

well as explicitly. There was also the Mithraism of ancient Persia.

CANTO XIX

URSULVARI

OR
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

So said the Sun. She of the
sparkling armlets wasted
no more time. Taking in her hands
the remaining
anklet she lamented: 'O women of
chastity who live
in this city ruled by the unjust king ! Listen to
this.

'I have suffered incomparable distress
this evening.

That which should not occur, has occurred
to me. How
can I endure it ? See this injustice.

'Is my husband a thief? They¹ killed

him, unwilling to
pay the price² of my anklet. What injustice
!

‘Shall I ever see (again) my beloved
husband in the
company of you all, O
injustice !

women of great chastity? See this

‘If I shall see my loving husband, shall
I hear him
utter the longed-for words, that he was not
in the wrong?
See this injustice !

1 According to Aṭiyārkunallār the use
of the verb in the
plural shows that the responsibility for the
deed did not merely
rest with the king but with his ministers also. If
this interpreta-
tion has any value, it bears testimony to the

fact that the king

could not and did not act on his own initiative
but consulted and
took the previous advice of his cabinet.

It is not clear whether

in this particular case the advice was taken. It
can be presumed,

however, that on such consultation was held.

2 The implication here is that her anklet
was so valuable
that the king could not pay the full

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price for it and hence wanted

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'If I do not hear him say that he was
not in the wrong, condemn me by saying that
I did unjust things.' Listen to this !'

All the residents of the
flourishing city of Madura

beheld the afflicted woman and

were moved by her
suffering agonies. In bewilderment
they exclaimed;

‘Since irremediable wrong has been
done to this woman,²
the unbending³ and righteous sceptre of
the king has been
bent. What is (the meaning of) this?

‘Lost is the glory of Tennavan,
the king of kings
(Pāṇṭya), possessor of the moonlike
umbrella and the
spear.⁴ What is (the meaning of) this?

‘The sheltering umbrella of the
victorious king that
had cooled the earth now generates
heat. What is (the
meaning of) this?
to deprive her husband of it by killing him.

To that extent the
king alone was the thief according to
Kannaki.

1 She vows that she will make her dead husband rise up and

say that he was in the right and the king was in the wrong. This

is in keeping with the prescription of the Kural that chaste ladies could do and undo anything. See Cila. (Tamil ed.), pp. 245, 315, 555.

2 The sympathy of the

women of Madura goes out to Kannaki. They condemn the king's action, and seem to endow her with divinity.

3 This is an important statement as it suggests that the Pāṇṭyan rule was tainted with unrighteousness for the first time.

Here we may recall the words of the Brahmana Kauśika at the commencement of canto xiii in which he paid a glowing tribute to the Pāṇṭyan rule.

4 The umbrella and the spear were
symbols of grace and prowess respectively
(see Perumpāṇ., l. 422).

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‘A new, great goddess has now come
before us bearing in her hand an anklet of pure
gold. What is (the meaning of)
this?

‘This afflicted woman, weeping from her
beautiful, red,
and collyrium-stained eyes, looks as one
possessed of
divinity. What is (the meaning of) it?’

Saying such things, the people of Madura
sympathized

with her and comforted her by raising their
accusing voices.

Among those who caused the tumult, some
showed (to

Kaṇṇaki) the body of her (murdered)
husband. She, the

golden creeper, saw him; but her he could not see.

At that moment the red-rayed sun
withdrew his fiery
rays and hid himself in the great mountain,
causing the
vast world to be enveloped in darkness.¹ In
the brief
twilight of that evening the flowery
creeper-like Kannaki
lamented aloud and the whole city
reverberated with her
cry. She who in the morning had received
from her em-
bracing husband the flower-wreath worn by
him and
decked her tresses with it, saw him that
evening in a pool
of blood gushing from his wounds. But he
did not see
her in an agony of grief. She then mourned
for him in

sorrow and wrath :²

‘O! Seeing me in deep affliction and
without a word

of consolation, is it fit that your body, fair
as the fairest

gold, should lie here in the dust? Will not
people say that

it was my inevitable fate³ that made the
righteous king

act thus wrongly in ignorance?

1 The poet wants to impress upon us the
idea that that

sight was so horrible that even the sun shut his eyes.
In other

words ‘the sun set and night came’.

2 Kāṇṇakī wants the people to accuse her and
not the king

for her misfortune.

3 The poet repeats in a number of places his
belief in past

karmā and its results.

'Is it just that,
in this elusive twilight with none to
aid me, your
bare ground,

garlanded beautiful breast should lie on the
before me who pine in lonely grief? Will
no people say that it was my pre-ordained fate which made
the Pāṇṭyan commit a wrong, that the whole world
proclaimed unjust?

'Is it right that you should be lying here in
the dust with blood gushing from your gaping
wounds, in front of me, the unfortunate one,
whose eyes are brimming with unceasing tears?
Though his subjects accuse the Pāṇṭ-yan who
committed the crime, will not good people say
that it is the result of my past actions?

'Are there women¹ here, are there women?
Are there women who can endure such
injustice done to their wedded husbands? Are

there such women?

‘Are there good people? Are there good people here?

Are there good people who nurture and fend for children

born of them? Are there good people here?

‘Is there a god? Is there a god? Is there a god in

this Kūṭal whose king’s sharp sword killed an innocent?

Is there a god?’

While she lamented in this manner, and embraced the

breast of her husband, where (once) the goddess of wealth

had resided, he stood up exclaiming: ‘O the full moon

face has faded!’ and wiped away her tears with his hands.²

1 According to Kannaḳi such injustice could not be per-

petrated where good women, good men and gods

live. In brief,

she regards it as a god-forsaken place.

2 This means that the wounded Kōvalan lay in a state of unconsciousness for a long time, and smitten by a flash of consciousness, he rose up to look at her changed face for the last time, and removed her tears. He died with his last words, 'Stay

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The fair lady fell to the ground, sobbing and wailing, and clasped the feet of her revered husband with both her bangled hands. Then he arose and discarded his mortal form and departed surrounded by a host of gods, saying as he went :
'O, my dear, stay; stay here.'

She cried out then : 'Is this illusion? What else is it? Is it a spirit that has deceived me? Where shall I go and find the

truth of this? Else I will not seek for my husband till my furious wrath is appeased. I will meet the cruel king (*tivēntan*) and ask him for an explanation of his action'. So saying she arose. As she stood up, she recollected her terrible dream, and her long carp-like eyes were overflowing with tears. remembered it.¹ Wiping away her front gate of the king's palace.

She stood up and re-
tears she went to the

here!' It is for students of psychology to explain this state of the mind of a dying man. But the poet puts it in such a way that we are moved to tears.

1 This apparently refers to the dream which Kannaki dreamt and recounted to Dēvanti, before setting out for Madura (see canto ix, ll. 45-54).

CANTO XX

VALAKKURAI KATAI¹

THE DEMAND FOR JUSTICE

At that time (the queen narrates her dream)

.2

'Alas! I saw, I saw (in my dream) the sceptre fall and the umbrella. The bell^a at the palace-gate shook itself and tinkled as it quaked.

'Alas! I also saw, I saw the eight cardinal points agitated; and darkness swallowed the sun. Alas! I also saw, I saw an iridescent rainbow in the night;^b a meteor glowing with heat fell by day. Alas!'

THAT WHICH IS PROGNOSTICATIVE

'The righteous sceptre and the white umbrella falling upside down to the hard ground; the bell at the gate of our victorious king's palace quivering and making the mind shiver with fear; the rainbow appearing in the night,

the meteor falling by day; the eight cardinal points in a state of agitation ; all these indicate some impending calamity .
I shall inform the king of it.'

1 There is no commentary of Aṭiyārkkuṇallar available for

this and the succeeding ten cantos.

2 The queen who was fast asleep, woke up and recalled her

dream indicative of evil portents to the State.

3 Kaṭaimaṇi or the bell of justice, also called āraiyicciṇṇaṇi

in Tamil literature. See Kamba-Rāmayaṇa, 'Bāla'.

4 A rainbow seen in the night is considered a sign of impending calamity.

Or is it a reference to a comet ?

VALAKKURAI KATAI

Followed then by maids decorated with

sparkling and radiant jewels, some of them bearing her looking-glass and others her ornaments, and surrounded by many hunch-backs, dwarfs, mutes and other menials, some carrying new clothes, some carrying silks, some carrying betel-boxes, some carrying paints, some carrying pastes, some carrying the musk of deer, some carrying garlands, some carrying wreaths, some carrying feather-fans, and others carrying incense. Several ladies with fragrant flowers in their hair sang praise thus: 'Long live the great queen of the Pāṇṭyan (Peruntēvi)¹ protecting the vast world', and followed again by her companions and bodyguards making obeisance, and speaking in praise of her, the great queen (Kōpperuntēvi) approached king Tennavaṇ in whose bosom Lakṣhmī ever dwells, and communicated her evil dream to him who was sitting on the lion-throne.

Just then was heard a cry: 'O, you gate-keeper!² O, gate-keeper! O, you gate-keeper of him who has lost his wisdom, and whose

virtueless heart deviated from the path of kingly justice,⁸ go tell (the king) that one who bears an anklet from a pair of tinkling anklets, and who has lost her husband, waits at the gate. O, tell him that.'

At this the gate-keeper approached the king, saying:

1 The Arumpatavural calls the queen tampirāṭṭi. The editor draws our attention to the fact that even today in the Malaināṭu the king and the queen go by the technical terms tampirāṇ and tampirāṭṭi.

2 The doorkeeper addressed by Kāṇṇaki was an official of the royal household, the dauvārika of Sanskrit literature. 3 The term used in the rājanīti).

text is iraimural (Sanskrit,

'Long live our lord of Kōrkai:¹
long live the lord of

the southern mountain; long live
Seliyaṇ;² long live Ten-
navan; long live Paṇcavan, unstigmatized
by calumny!

‘Someone waits at the gate. She
is not the deity

Korravai, the goddess of victory,³
holding in her hand the

victorious spear, and standing upon the
nape of the buffalo

with an unceasing gush of blood from
its fresh wound.

Nor is she Aṇaṅku (Bhadrakālī),⁴
youngest sister of the

seven virgins, who made Śiva dance;
nor even is she

the Kālī of the forest⁵ which is the
residence of ghosts

and goblins; nor again is she the
goddess that tore up the

mighty chest of Dāruka.⁶ She appears
to be filled with

1 The quondam capital of the Pāṇṭyaṇ

kingdom.

2 Seliyaṇ like Tennaṇaṇ is another Pāṇṭiyaṇ title. Pañcavaṇ is yet another title.

3 Mahiṣāsuraṃardani.

4 Piṭāri (also Cāmuṇṭi) one of the seven lōkamātas. (Also

known as mahā-māyā.) The names of these mother-goddesses

are mentioned in the Purāṇas. The Purāṇas also speak of the

fourteen daughters of Dakṣa married to the progenitor Kaśyapa,

as lōkamātas. It is also said that Cāmuṇṭi was responsible for

making Siva dance. This dance was, perhaps, ūrdhvatāṇḍavam

which tradition records in the shrine of Tiruvālaṅkāṭu, near

Madras.

5 It is to be noted that Kāḷi is different from Bhadrakāḷi.

6 The Goddess who killed the asura Dāruka. This mighty

asura engaged in austere penance for which

he was blessed by
 Brahmā and told that he would not be killed
 by a Dēva, asura,
 man or any other creature or weapon either in
 the day or night.
 He was lording over the whole universe,
 and the chief gods
 attacked him in vain. Angry at his behaviour,
 a Kālī came out
 of Śiva's third eye, and she was sent against
 Dāraka. But even
 she could not equal him as he had the
 knowledge of a secret
 mantra which he and his wife alone knew.
 Umā went in the guise of a Brahmana lady
 to his wife and offered to pray for her

VALAKKURAI KATAI

resentment. She seems to swell with rage. She has lost her husband; she has in her hand an anklet of gold, and she waits at the gate.'¹

The king said : 'Let her come : bring her here!' Then the gate-keeper brought her and showed to her the monarch and she went near the ruling king, who said :

'O lady with the tear-stained face, who art thou, my young lady? What has brought thee hither before us ?'

She replied :

'Inconsiderate king! I have something to say. I am a native of much celebrated Pukar, one of whose kings of untarnished glory once allayed the suffering of a dove² to the wonderment of gods, and another sacrificed at his

husband's life with her and thus learned the mantra. Then in the evening Kaṭi challenged him again and killed him. This Kaṭi is said to be Bhadrakaṭi whose cult is now prevalent in Malabar. The Malabar of this story.

legends Kaḷikarpam and Badroṭpatti furnish details
Cf. the article entitled 'A Note on Kaḷi or Bha-

gavati cult of Kerala', by C. Achyuta Menon in S.
Commemoration Volume (1936), pp. 234-39.

K. Aiyangar's

1 The gate-keeper's first impression of Kaṇṇaki is
looked like Maḥiṣāsūramardani, Cāmūṇḍi, or Kaḷi.

that she

2 The story of Śibi. Cf. Puṛaṇ., st. 37, 39 etc. Kuṛalveṇṇā
72, Paṛimēlaḷakar, comment. The original story is contained in
the epic Mahābhārata. Śibi was a monarch of the solar race and

renowned for his kindness to animals. Once a dove fell into his
lap and asked him to protect it from the pursuit of a hawk. The
hawk demanded of the king either the dove or flesh from his
body equal to its weight. The king offered to give his flesh and
cut it from his thigh and from other parts of his body. The weight
proved unequal to that of the dove. He therefore offered his
whole body to be weighed and thereby saved the poor dove from
being killed.

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chariot-wheel his dear and only son¹,
grieved at the sight of

a cow whose eyes were filled with
pearl-like tears and

who rang the bell at the palace-gate
(for justice). From

that city, Kōvalaṇ, the son of the
merchant Mācattuvaṇ,

belonging to a reputed and exalted family
of faultless name,

driven by fate, entered your city, O
king with tinkling

anklets, to earn his livelihood, when he
was murdered by

you while out to sell my anklet. I am
his wife. My name
is Kaṇṇaki.'

The king replied: 'Divine lady,

it is not injustice to

put a thief to death. Know that it is
kingly justice.'²

The lustrous lady retorted :

‘O Lord of Korkai, you have fallen
from your righteous
course ! My golden anklet contains gems
inside.’

‘O lady,’ said the king, ‘what
you said now is well
said. Our anklet contains pearls
inside. Give it here.’

It was given and placed before
him. Kannaki then
broke open her beautiful anklet, and a
gem flew into the
king’s face.

When he saw that gem, the king, with his
umbrella falling and his sceptre
faltering, said : ‘Am I a
ruler—I who have listened to the
words of a goldsmith?

It is I who am the thief.
The protection of the subjects of
the southern kingdom has failed in
my hands for the first
time. Let me^a depart from
this life.' Speaking thus

1 Maṇunṭikaṇṭa Coḷaṇ. Cf. paḷamoll.
st. 93; Kuṛaḷvenpā
547, Parimēlaḷakar, comment. He had his
son crushed under the
wheels of a chariot, because his own vehicle
had accidentally run
over a calf, for which its mother, the cow,
pleaded for justice by
approaching the palace and ringing
the bell of justice with its horns.
(See Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature, p. 191).

2 Rājanīti, also Daṇṭanīti.

3 The king's sense of justice led to his
extreme repentance and final collapse.

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the king fell down in a swoon, and his great queen collapsed and shuddered saying : 'It is impossible for woman to replace the loss of a husband.'¹ Worshipping both his feet, she fell down.² Poor woman !

VENPĀ

1. The saying of several assembly-men,
that *dharma*

will become the god to Death to those who do
sinful deeds,

is not wrong. O queen of the conquering
king who did

an unjust and cruel deed ! I have indeed
committed a

great sin.³ See what I shall do.

2. Seeing me and terrified at me, the sinner with

tears flowing from my red eyes, with the matchless anklet in my hand, with a body which seemed bereft of life, and

with my dark forest-like tresses of hair, the Lord of

Kūṭal became a corpse.*

1 People who lose their parents may be consoled, but not

women who lose their husbands. The idea is that husbands are

their very lives; without them women are dead to the world. Any

relative can be substituted, but not a husband. The poet puts

these words into the mouth of the queen when the king collapsed,

but their significance is increased by their being addressed to

Kaṇṇakī. This can be fitly compared with the statement in the

Rāmāyaṇa where Vālmīki puts into the mouth of Rāma a state-

ment to the effect that wives and relatives can be

found in every

country but no country can give one one's own brother. The

verse runs as follows.

dēśē dēśē kaṭatranī dēśē dēśē ca
bāndhawāḥ |

tantu dēśam na pasyāmi yatra bhrātā
sahōdaraḥ ||

2 The queen fell down unconscious, but not dead.

3 The caption venpā marked above this stanza seems out of

place for these words are spoken by Kaṇṇaki to the queen who
fell down in extreme sorrow.

4 Again Kaṇṇaki's utterance.

3. The moment the Lord of Vaikai saw the dust on her (Kaṇṇaki's) body, her dark hair hanging loose, her tears, and the matchless

anklet in her hand he was over-

whelmed.¹ And the moment his words of the lady he gave up his life.

ears received the



1 It is doubtful in the light of the expression அக்காரினை whether the third stanza of the venpā contains Kappaki's words. It seems to be the statement of the author, for Kappaki cannot speak of herself as அக்காரினை.

CANTO XXI
VANCINA MALAI
OR
THE GREAT WRATH

(THE SEVEN WOMEN OF CHASTITY)

KANNAKI spoke thus to the Paṇṭyan queen :

‘O, Dēvi of the great king ! I am one pursued by cruel fate. Though by nature I am ignorant yet you will see that he who ‘did harm to another in the forenoon will find himself harmed in the afternoon.’¹

At midday a lady² with abundant locks of hair called upon the *vanni* tree and the kitchen³ to bear evidence to her chastity.

When a woman with a wide, striped *alkul* was told by her companions that her husband was a figure of sand upon the banks of Ponni (Kāverī), she remained⁴ there

1 See Kuraivenpā 319; Perunkatai, st. 56, l. 259.

2 Kannaḱi narrates the legends of seven women of Pukar who had won a name for their exemplary chastity.

3 This tradition is still current in Tiruppurampayam and Tirumarukal. The Lord enshrined at the former place goes by the name of

Sākṣinātha. See Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's note. A similar legend is recorded in what is known as Sāṇṇalaitta Tiru-

ṇṇālyāṭal (st. 62) where the vanni tree, the God Siva and a well are cited as witnesses.

4 The moment the woman, who was apparently a widow, heard from her companions that the sandy figure was that of her husband, she did not return home but stood firm in that place lest the figure should be destroyed by floods. Even today it is a

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without returning home even
when the waves encircled

her without ruining her husband's image.

The daughter of the celebrated king
Karikāla¹ followed

the floods which carried away her husband,
Vaṇcikkōn,²

calling aloud: 'O, my lover with hill-like

shoulders!'

Then the sea itself came and presented her husband before

her. She, the golden creeper, returned embracing him.

There was the lady (in the form of a stone) who remain-

ed in the park by the seashore looking at the approaching

vessels. After the return of her husband, she cast off her

form of stone.³

There was another lady with lancelike eyes who, when

her co-wife's child had accidentally fallen into a well, drop-

ped her child also into it and thus saved both the children.⁴

custom among some classes for the chaste wife to go to the river

bank, make an image of her husband in sand and

after making

offerings to it, to cast off the clothes she was wearing and to put on new ones.

1

See Kuruntokai, st. 31; Akam., st. 45, 76, etc.

The name

of Karikala's daughter was Ātmanti, also Manti, (Akam.); Tolc.

Akattiṇal, sūtra 54 Naccinārkkiniyar's gloss. She seems to be

younger than Auvvaiyar, the great Caṅkam poetess. This shows that not only Tamil princes but princesses also were poets. Tamil women were highly learned.

2 Also Āṭṭanatti or merely Atti. The incident referred to took place at Kaḷar on the banks of the Kāveri. See Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's detailed note (Śila. Tamil ed., p. 488).

3 The fourth lady turned herself into a stone when her husband went overseas, but assumed her original form on his return.

Though not a parallel, the Akalyā legend in the Rāmāyaṇa of

Vālmīki affords a comparison Akalyā, once turned into a stone,

assumed her original form at the touch of Rāma.

4 The fifth lady dropped her own child into

the well after
her co-wife's child, when in her custody, had fallen
into it. Then

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Seeing a stranger staring at her with
lascivious eyes, a
lady changed her full-moon face into that
of a monkey.

When her departed husband returned, that
flower-soft lady,
with pure gems on her *alkul* gave up her
monkey face.¹

Last there was the lady, beautiful as a
golden image,
who overheard her mother speaking thus to
her (the girl's)
father: 'Without paying heed to the wise
saying of the
learned,² that a woman's wisdom is fraught
with folly, in
the course of our play, I told my maid

servant, "If I
give birth to a daughter, and if you, O, maid
of lustrous
armlets, give birth to a son, he will be my
daughter's
husband." She has borne this in mind, and
now demands
their wedlock. I hear this with pain, my
mind is much
exercised. How unfortunate I am!' At
this, she who
looked like a golden image (even before the
proposal from
her parents) dressed herself in a new silken
robe, tied up
the tresses of her hair, approaching the son
(of the maid)
prostrated herself before him, and bore his feet
on her head!³
"I was born in that city (Pukār) in
which such great
women of fragrant tresses⁴ were born. If
these things

happened truly, and if I am also a chaste lady,
I shall not
allow this city
to flourish but will destroy it along with
its sovereign. You will see the truth of this.'

she started a hue and cry and with the help of
her neighbours
saved both children. She thus hoped to be above
reproach.

1 Assuming forms at will shows the force and
power at the
back of chastity, the virtue of virtues.

2 Cf. *Īśa*, sūtra 23.

3 Having overheard the promise made by
her mother to
her maid-servant—before her birth—to give her to
that maid's
son,
she volunteered to marry him when the time came.

4 See *Paṭṭiṇattuplāyār Purāṇam* for a

slightly changed
version of the tale of seven women (Pūmpukār
Carukkam).

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(After speaking thus) she left that place and cried out: 'O, men and women of Madura of the four temples (*māṭam*)!'¹ O, gods in the heavens! and O, ye saints! Listen to me. I curse this capital of him who did wrong to my beloved husband. I am not to blame.'

Then she twisted off her left breast with her hand, and going round the city of Madura thrice making this vow, in deep anguish, she threw that beautiful breast whirling into the fragrant street. Before this illustrious lady who had made this vow, appeared the god of fire, with flames, in the form of a Brahmana, blue in hue, his tuft like the red sky, and with milk-white teeth, saying: 'O, chaste lady!'² As I long ago received the order that I should destroy this city by fire on the day on which you

would be cruelly wronged, who can escape death here?'⁸

The wrathful Kaṇṇaki then ordered: 'Spare⁴ Brahma- nas, the righteous⁵, cows, chaste women, the aged and

1 The four are named Tiruvālavāi, Tirunaḷḷāru, Tirumuṭ- ankaḷ, Tirunaṭuvūr. According to Naccinārkkinīyar, Kali., st, 92, the four are Kaṇṇi, Kariyamāl, Kāḷi and Ālavāi. See Cila. (Tamil ed.), p. 490. It would appear that the name Kūṭal was derived from these four temples of which a description is given in Sambandar's Tēvāram.

2 A description of the god of fire as he appeared before Kaṇṇaki. On the Agni cult there is an interesting contribution by Dr J. P. H. Vogel in Ind. Ant., December 1913.

3 This means that Agni asked spared.

Kaṇṇaki who should be

4 This shows that the slaughter of innocents was not coun- tenanced at any stage or in any manner. It is interesting that Brahmanas were exempted, surely having evoked respect for their

learning and character. These must have been the Śrōtriyas often mentioned in Sanskrit epics and lawbooks. See Dikshitar
Hindu Administrative Institutions, pp. 1 87-9.

5 This shows
that members of other castes who were wedded
to svadharma were also spared.

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children, but go towards unrighteous people.'
And the city of Kūṭal, belonging to the
king of the mighty chariot,¹ was enveloped by
fumes and flames.

VENPĀ*

When the glorious Pāṇṭyan, his maidens,
palaces, army with its shining bows, and
elephants, were consumed by the fire of chastity,
the immortal gods of that unfortunate city went
out of sight because of their great purity.

1 The Pāṇṭyan was noted for his chariot force.

2 This venpā. says the editor of the text, is not found in certain manuscripts.

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CANTO XXII

ALARPATU KATAI

OR

THE CONFLAGRATION

(IN Madura) the burning mouth of
the messenger god (Agni)² opened itself.
The guardian deities² closed their doors.³
In order to prove to Mother Earth that
his rule was righteous, Celiyan, the warrior
king of kings, gave up his very life on
account of the dishonour caused by his

bent sceptre.⁴

Not knowing that the king was dead on his

1 The god Agni is ministering to the wants of the Dēvas.

Hence the epithet Dēvadūta in Vēdic literature. The rationale of

all religious offerings to Agni is that he takes them to the respec-

tive gods and *pitṛs* to whom such *havis* were intended.

2 Among the guardian deities of the city are mentioned the

four caste-būtam:—the Brahmana-būtam, the Kṣatriya-būtam,

the Vaiśya-būtam and the Vēlāṅ-būtam.

This proves that the social polity Varṇāśramadharma had come to this part of India at a much earlier period.

It may be noted that different colours—white, red, brown and black—are assigned to these respective

varṇas showing that once the division of communities was accord- ing to colour.

3 'That they closed their doors' means 'that they gave up

their legitimate
function of defending the four gates of the city
walls'.

4 The poet skilfully weaves beautiful
ideas into the text.

When the straight sceptre hung its head, it
seemed to give a

message to the king's mind that unless he
sacrificed himself it

would not come back to its original pristine
straightness of justice.

The rapid march of ideas—the rod of justice-
bending, the king

dying, and the rod attaining its
orbed.

original form—is all vividly des-

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throne¹ along with his queen of untarnished
chastity, the *purōhita*,² the astrologer, the
Brahmana judges, the finan- cier (Kāviti),³ and
the learned ministers, attended by the
palace-servants, and maid-attendants, stood

speechless like a group in a painted picture.⁴ (At that time) the elephant-riders,⁵ cavalrymen, charioteers, and the Marava⁶ soldiers with terrible swords, were bewildered by the fire at the victorious gate of the king's palace, and were permitted to leave.

The presiding deity of the Āḍibūtam,⁷ [whose body
shedding its cool and lustrous rays like a
cluster of pearls,
was white as the moon,
wore a brilliant pearl neck-
lace along with other ornaments, and had on
his shining
tuft a wreath of white lotus, *arukai*, *nanti*
and other

1

Araṣukaṭṭil is the term used in the text for the throne.

2 The executive officers of the king are

mentioned. The
purōhita is mentioned first showing the high
dignity which was
attached to his office. For the place of the purōhita,
in the scheme
of ancient Indian polity, see Dikshitar, Hindu
tions, ch. iii, sec. 2.

Admin. Institu-

3 Kāviti is perhaps the technical term for the
Superinten-
dent of Finance. For different meanings of the
expression see
the Tamil Lexicon, p. 903.

4 This is an indication of the flourishing state
of painting
in the early centuries of the Christian era.

5 The traditional fourfold forces are given.
The fourfold
army had come to stay in the Tamil land.

6 The term Maṛava may mean a hardy warrior.

7 A full description of the Vedic Brahmana
and his outfit.

The Brahmana-būtam was an ideal example for the members of

that community to copy and follow. The description is told twice

In certain particulars. Lines 16-33 are not found in certain

manuscripts and from the redundant nature of the description,

they can be taken as interpolations.

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flowers. He was robed in the purest
white, thin silk, not yet dry, and
his breast was painted with paste made from
the unblossomed *vaṭṭikai*, the bright dust
of *vaṇṇikai*

(sandal) and *kōṭṭam*. He consumed
heartily the sacrificial

smoke, caused by the pouring of
honey, milk and

jaggery (into the fire),¹ and moved
in the forenoon
from the bathing ghats and the temple
of the gods, to
halls of Vēdic chanting.² He would
stand on his feet
at midday and go to his home in the
afternoon, holding
in his hands an unfolded umbrella, a
staff, a water-bowl,
a fire-stick,³ and inseparable *kusa* grass,
with the Vēdas on
his tongue and his sacred thread on
his breast] without
deviating from the established
procedure, would kindle
the three fires⁴ with the sacrificial
utensils as ordained by
Brahmā.

Next was the great deity of the
Kṣatriya-būtam,⁵
[whose body was the colour of the red

rays of the sun,

and who wore among jewels set with
spotless gems, other
ornaments like the diadem (worn by a
king). He decked
his tuft with a wreath of *campaka*,
karuviḷai, ved *kūṭā*-

1 The *havis* offerings consisted of
honey, milk, curds, and
ghee.

2 These are evidently *pāṭaśālas*, the
institutions in modern
times, for teaching the Vēdas.

3 The fire-stick is a twig of the sacred
fig tree, called *samit*
in Sanskrit literature.

4 The three fires are the *gārhapatya*,
āhavaniya and *dakṣi-*
nāgni, worshipped by Agnihotrits, a
practice that continues
today in Tamil districts.

5 The outfit of the Kṣatriya-būtam.
Lines 37-50 also are

interpolations giving a description more or less as is found in the lines following. To wear a tuft was the accepted custom of the day for all communities.

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lam and cool and sweet water-plants, *jāti* and other flowers. He wore garlands strung with choice flowers and other ornamentations. He had rings on all ten fingers of his hands,¹ and his broad breast was of *kumkumam* colour. He wore around his waist a soft brilliant-red silk, and he consumed the hot preparation of *cāli* rice brought to him in a gold vessel, besides other agreeable sweetmeats]. His body had the sparkling brilliance of coral, and he ruled the sea-girt world, holding in his hands the *muracu*, white umbrella, feather-fan, tall flag,² the famous *ankusa*, a steel spear and a binding rope of steel. He

drove away countless kings of great fame, and capturing the whole earth,³ he ruled righteously, punishing evil-doers, and protected the world like Neṭīyōn himself with great and growing fame.

Then came the great deity of the illustrious Vaiśya-būtam⁴ with his body the lustrous colour of pure gold, wearing every ornament except the diadem worn by cele-

1 The term añjumakaṇ is vague but has been interpreted as meaning 'one having rings on all five fingers.' No light is forthcoming from the commentary. The line may be interpreted as 'he who wore rings on his fingers emitting rays of light' (añcu).

2 The chief characteristics (lakṣaṇa) and deeds of the Pāṇṭyaṇ have been attributed to the Kṣatriya-būtam.

3 Reference

There is perhaps to Kṛṣṇa helping the Pāṇṭava Arjuna against his enemy Duryodhana. The Arumpatavural interprets ālvōṇ as Arjuna in 1. 52 and manṇar as others in 1. 56.

Duryodhana and

4 The outfit of the Vaiśya-būtam is furnished. The plough-share and the balance are the symbols of the duties of Vaiśyas and represent the bhūvaiśyaṇ and dhanavaiśyaṇ into which the

whole community was divided. The Vaiśyas could give gifts and receive gifts in their turn. Lines 67-74 also are interpolations and repeat more or less the same description of the *būtam*.

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brated monarchs of the strong spear, catering for the vast world as befits a member of the merchant community and bearing in his hands the ploughshare and the balance. [His cloth was of the much praised golden colour. In his tuft was a wreath linked together with flowers of *veṭci*, *tālai*, honey-laden *āmpal*, *sēṭal*, *neytal*, *pūlai* and *marutam*. On his lightning-like breast was sandal paste of a brilliant colour shining like burnished gold. He would give and accept food well mixed with gram, peas, *dhal*, black gram, and several other green grains. It was he who enjoyed his meal before noon with water in his hand and frequented granaries where paddy was stored, fields full of birds, merchants' shops and shady *kāñci* trees.

Holding the plough, the weighing

balance needed in bazaars, the *tāl*¹ of enveloping brilliance. and the *yāl*, he would favour (people) with abundance of produce and entertain guests. He would also sell to those who needed them rare articles brought from mountains and seas.]² He assumed the form of a chieftain pursuing the harmless agricultural life³ and resembled Śiva wearing a young crescent in his resplendent coiffure.

There also appeared the chief of the (Vēḷala) Vēḷāṇ- bŭtams,⁴ who received sacrificial offerings in noisy Madura, (who was the colour of the *karuviḷai* flower with decorative .

1 *Tāl* is another vague term and has been taken to mean 'lampstand'.

2 This shows that the Vaiśyas had sea-borne trade as well as caravantrade.

3 The Vaiśya chief was the lord of the agricultural tracts. He is likened to Śiva.

4 The outfit of the Vēḷāṇ-bŭtam. Lines 89-96 are interpolations being a repetition of the bŭtam's

ornaments of gold and silver, who wore
 lustrous *kaṭakam*,
 whose broad breast was painted with the
 dried paste of
 fragrant *akil*, who wore in his tuft a
 wreath of flowers
 grown on the branches of trees, creepers,
 water-plants
 and others, who held a plough¹ made by
 expert black-
 smiths, and who had attained
 praiseworthy prestige),
 whose body was like a cleaned sapphire, who
 had a dress
 made of the bright *kaṭakam*, and who had
 the technique
 needed for dancing and was versed in the

different modes
of singing.²

(These four pūtams) said : 'Since we
know beforehand
that this city is to be consumed by fire on the
day on which
the king's justice fails, and since we know
that this is just,
it is proper that we should go away from
here.' All these
four guardian deities deserted their
respective quarters
even before the heroic woman plucked off her
breast.

Then the street of grain-dealers, the car
street decorated
with festoons, and the four streets
occupied respectively by men of the four
castes, began to be agitated
as on the day when the Kāṇṭāvaṇam³ blazed
forth [set on

fire by the reliant (Arjuna) of the powerful monkey-standard].⁴

1 The plough was common to the Vēlāḷa and the Vaiśya.

The latter had the balance as well.

2

It transpires that the Vēlāḷas had their own rural amuse-

ments of singing and dancing so as to relieve the monotony of their agricultural occupation.

3

The reference is to the burning of the Kāṇṭāvaṇam. For

a description of it, see the Mahābhārata.

4

This flag signified the leadership of Arjuna.

It may be

noted that l. 111

is not found in certain manuscripts.

The flames did not go near the residences of the righteous though they blazed among the dwellings of the unrighteous. Unaffected by the fire, cows and calves reached the broad streets of the pious cowherds.¹ Strong and fierce male elephants and herds of female elephants and fleet steeds ran away outside the city walls.

(In that city) there were women² lying unconscious in their soft, smooth widespread beds under the spell of love and wine in the company of their husbands. Their beautiful young breasts were painted with unguents, their eyes were darkened with collyrium and their hair was adorned with wreaths of fragrant, honey-laden, gaping buds filling the air with perfume. From these alighted pollen on to their breasts painted with *kumkumam* and decorated with pearl necklaces.

Other women, with yellow spotted *alkuls* and fragrant tresses, whose lisping children

with rosy mouths and toddling gait came in the company of grey-haired women, awoke from sleep on cotton mattresses.

The matrons who unfailingly attended to household duties and entertained guests, rejoiced greatly. They worshipped and praised the fire-god, whose flames rose high, saying: 'Losing her husband, whose chest shone with a beautiful garland, this lady won her victory with her

1 Followers of dharma as well as the animal kingdom were left untouched by fire. Similarly chaste women and innocent children were spared. It was by no means a slaughter of innocents.

2 Two kinds of household women are distinguished. The women described in ll. 119-27 are those who have not yet given birth to children. The women described in ll. 128-32 are those who have children. Besides these there were old women, as the reference to grey hairs indicates.

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anklet. Is this war waged by her breast
unjust ?¹ Not
so.'

In the far-famed street of the songstresses,
² trained in
the sixty-four arts,³ where could be heard the
reverbera-
tions of the *mirudangam*, the sweet subdued
flute, and
the vibration of the singing *yāl* produced by
variations in
tone, the dancing-girls who lost their theatre,
burst out:

'Where does this woman come from ?
Whose daughter
is she ? Wonder it is that one single woman

who had lost

her husband, could vanquish the
inconsiderate king with

her anklet, and finally set fire to this city'.

Seeing the great city had lost its
evening festivals,⁴

the chanting of the Vēdas (*āraṇam*), the
kindling of sacri-

ficial fires, the worship of gods, the lighting
of domestic

lamps, the healthful repose of nightfall, and
the resound-

ing notes of the *muracam*, and because it
was unable to

bear the thrust of the blazing flame, the
goddess Maturā-

pati appeared before the sorely oppressed
heroic wife, who,

pained at heart by the decease of her
beloved husband,

heaved a deep sigh (which shook her frame),
and roamed

aimlessly through the streets and lanes⁵ in a state of agitation, partly struggling hard to walk and partly bewildered and unconscious.

1 Here is a justification by the chaste women of Madura of the action of Kāṇṇaki and of her curse. It is said that they prostrated themselves before the blazing fire as an act of religious duty.

2 Here is a reference to the public theatre of the city which was consumed by the conflagration.

3 See above, p. 206, n. 3.

4 Śiball offered usually at evening. Other features were Vedic chanting and prayers to sacrificial fires and at temples.

5 The term used for lanes is kavalai.

VENPĀ

The goddess known as Maturāpati¹ came before her who had wrung off her fierce young breast, and whose victory² equalled that of the Goddess of Wealth,³ the Goddess of Learning,⁴ and the great Goddess⁵ who killed and stood upon the demon Makiṣāsura.

1 Maturāpati was the family-deity of the Pāṇṭyan king.

Every reigning Hindu king, ancient or modern, has his own kula-

dēvatā. In the Raghuvamśa Kālidāsa says that after Rāma's

death the family-deity of Ayōdhyā appeared at midnight to Kuśa,

son and successor. Today Padmanābhasvāmī is the family deity

of Travancore kings, and Cāmuṇḍī of Mysore Rajas.

2 Kaṇṇaki's signal victory over the Madura
king was tanta-
mount to all the victories of the three goddesses
put together.

3 Lakṣhmi.

4 Sarasvatī.

5 Umā in the form of Maṇiṣāsūramardanī.

CANTO XXIII

KATTURAI KATAI

OR

THE EXPLANATION

WITH her head decorated with a crescent
and her matted

locks, *kuvaḷai*-like eyes, white radiant face,
coral-mouth

revealing her teeth, with the left half
of her body

dark blue, and the right half golden, with a golden lotus

in her left hand, and a glittering and terrifying sword in her

right, with a victorious *kaṭal* on her right leg, and a match-

less jingling anklet on her left, Maturāpati,¹ the family

deity of the chief—who ruled the cool harbour of Kor̥kal²

and Kumari port, whose northern limit was the golden

Himalayas³ and who was lord of Potiyil—unwilling to

1 A description of the form of the presiding deity of the

city of Madura. This is in agreement with the idea in Sanskrit

legends that every great capital of ancient times had its own

guardian deity who was in charge of the city. We hear in the

Rāmāyaṇa of the presiding deity of Lanka,

appearing before

Hanumān, the monkey ambassador of Sugrīva.

2 Kōṛkal and Kumārī were the ports of the Pāṇṭyas. Here

the poet refers to the Pāṇṭyan as chief of the maeltime tracts

while in the next line he describes him as chief of the hill tribes.

This is one way of extolling his name and fame.

3 This does not necessarily mean that the Pāṇṭyan kingdom extended on the north as far as the Himalayas. It demonstrates

however that the prowess of Pāṇṭyan arms had been felt by the

ruling princes of northern India whose northern limit was the

Himalayas. This is in keeping with the statement of Āriyappatai-

kaṇṇaṇḍa Neṭuñceliyan occurring in the Kaṭṭurai towards the end

of 'Maturaikkāṇṭam'. A short poem is ascribed to him (Puram.,

t. 183).

face the graceful but sorrow-stricken woman, the heroic wife who, highly perturbed, had plucked out one of her breasts, went behind her¹ and said: 'Blessed lady! Canst thou listen to my complaint? Whereupon, the woman with the grief-stricken face, turned to her right and asked: 'Who art thou following me from behind? Art thou aware of my deep pain?'

Maturāpati replied: 'Yes, I am aware of thy great suffering, O faultless lady! I am the tutelary deity of the vast city of Kūṭal. I wish to speak a word. I am much concerned at the fate of thy husband. Lady of golden bracelets, listen. O listen to a word of mine, noble lady! Wilt thou not pay heed, O friend, to the lamentable disease causing anguish to my mind? Hear, my dear, the fruits of our kings' deeds in their previous births.² Listen also to

the account of your husband's past deeds resulting in this present misery.

‘My ears have heard only the sound of Vedic chanting³ but have never heard the sound of the bell (clamouring for justice).⁴ Except for the slander of kings who pay their

1 The poet

graphically describes how the Goddess of Madura approached the Lady of Chastity, giving us the impression that she thought herself inferior to Kannaki. She therefore appeared from behind and hearing to her words.

made an appeal to her to give a patient

2

The theory of belief in past karmā is once again stressed. 3 The deafening chanting of the Vedic Brahmanas in every corner of the city. Cf. Maturaikkāñci, 1. 656.

4 The bell of justice, also called

arāicclmaṇi. Tradition affirms that every palace had such a bell in front of it, for the use of people and even animals whenever injustice was done to them by the State, so as to bring it to the king's notice. The Goddess of Madura says that she had never heard the sound of that bell, implying that there had never been a breach of justice in the State

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tributes by prostrating themselves before our monarch, his sceptre has never incurred the displeasure of his subjects.¹ Moreover though fair-faced girls cast shy looks towards him forcing the passion of his powerful heart beyond the control of his intellect², as the young elephant runs wild uncontrolled by a trained rider, yet this is no stain to kings born in this noble family associated with high morals.

‘Hast thou not heard that a Pāṇṭyan

king, whose hand had broken the golden crown and the glittering bracelets of the king of gods wielding the thunderbolt, knocked one day at the door-less house³ of Kirandai, whose life was valueless (to others), and overheard his (Kiran- dai's) wife telling her husband : "You departed for a distant place, and left me in this *manram* saying that no fence was stronger than the protection of our monarch. Has that fence ceased to protect us today?" Instantly the king closed his ears, as if pierced by a red-hot smoking nail.

He quaked with fear as his heart burnt within him, and he cut off his hand⁴ in order to maintain a righteous sceptre

to her knowledge, and that this was the first time that injustice had been done.

1 Protection of his subjects is the supreme duty of the king. This is also the prescription of all niti treatises in Sanskrit. (See also Purgam., st. 72. Cf. l. 34 with ll. 76-7 of 'Vajakkuraikatal',

canto XX).

2 The weakness of the Pāṇṭyan who lacked control over his senses is brought out, but this was never attended by injustice of any sort.

3 This statement agrees with that noted by Megasthenes in

his Indika that there were no thieves in the land and that the

people slept with their doors open.

4 Cf. Sila., patikam; also Palamoli, st. 102. The commentators on the Tolkappiyam refer to this incident.

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without any slur. There is, therefore, no blot on those.

born in this royal family. Hear,
again, the truth of the
matter.

‘When a king of this dynasty, a wielder of the polished spear, who had richly fed (the combatants in the Mahābhārata war) had secured peace, he held a great durbar.¹ An able Brahmana, Parāśara, who belonged to the good and fertile kingdom of the Lord of highly reputed Pukar wielding a righteous sceptre and a triumphant sword—one of whose kings weighed (his another awarded justice to a

flesh) to save a dove,² and cow³—and who had heard of

the peerless munificence of the Cēra of the curved lance,

by offering the heavens⁴ to a Tamil Brahmana poet, said to

himself: “I shall see this Cēra of great valour and long

lance.” He then passed through jungles and country

1 This may also refer to an assembly of State when there

was an army review including a feast in honour of the army. This

practice is evident from the Kalinkattupparaṇi,
and the technical

term for this is nāḷolakkam and here it is termed
perunāḷirukkai.

Hence it may be a reference to the Pāṇṭyan
king. There are

others who find here a reference to a certain Cēra
king Utiyaṇcēraḷ

(see below, 'Ucalvari', st. 29; also Puṇam., st. 2,
Akam., st. 233).

Several references go to strengthen the tradition
that a Cēra took

an active part in the Mahābhārata war.

2

This reference is to Cibi; see above, p. 248, n. 4.

3 This reference is to Manunitikaṇṭa Cōlan;
see above, p.

249, n. 1.

4 Pāḷaḷkautamaṇār. Cf. Patirru, Third Ten,
colophon. The

Cēra is Palyāṇaiceḷkeḷukuttuvan, younger brother
of Imayavara-

mpan, The legend goes that Kautamaṇār, a
Brahmana and a

Tamil poet, performed ten sacrifices (yajñas) and

in the course of

the tenth, the Brahmana and his lady
disappeared by going to
heaven. In its accomplishment Kelukuttuvan
helped him (see below, canto xxviii, ll. 137-8; also
Akam., st. 233).

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places and towns leaving behind him the tall
Malaya hills.¹

There, by the force of his dialectical skill,²
which he had

acquired in the traditional manner, from the
twice-born

Brahmana— who with the thought of achieving
oneness with

the infinite³ kindled the threefold fires⁴ as
ordained in the

four Vēdas and performed the five great
sacrifices⁵ and

the six great duties⁶—he defeated his rivals and earned

the title of *pārpaṇavākai*.⁷

As he was returning home with

great and valuable gifts, he reached the village of Tankāl⁸

of the righteous Pāṇṭyan and of *dharmaic* Brahmanas. In

this village, on a platform beneath a Bōdi tree,⁹ luxuriant

1 The Malaya hills are the Potiyil of Tamil literature.

2 An expert in the science of tarka.

3 Desirous of mōkṣa or salvation so as to be liberated from the trammels of samsāra.

4 Gārhapatya, āhavanīya and dakṣiṇāgni.

5 Pañcamahāyajña, or pañcayajña as it is called. It is incumbent on the members of the twice-born classes to perform these every day.

6 The six duties are learning and teaching, performing sacrifices and having sacrifices performed, giving and receiving gifts. See Hindu Administrative Institutions, p. 188.

7 It is a theme which describes the greatness a learned Brahmana attained through the performance of sacrifices. (See Pura., Venpāmālai, 'Vākai.', st. 9.) But here it is the conferment of a distinction by a king on one who comes out successfully in debates with equally learned men. The reference is to the branch of a tree worn to indicate literary powers.

8 Identified with Tiruttankāl near Śivakāsi railway station.

The Brahmanas of this village are termed Pañcagrāmikaḥ by the commentator. Apparently they were one among the many local Brahmana communities.

9 The reference is to the sacred *āsvattha* tree which was also the Buddhist *Bōdi* tree. Cf. *Rāmā.*, Bk. II, ch. lxviii, st. 17 where *Bodhibhavana* is mentioned.

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with green leaves, the tired man stayed awhile with his staff,¹ water-bowl, white umbrella, fire-stick, a small bundle of articles and slippers, and said :
“Long live the victor whose protecting white umbrella assures his certain success. Long live the protector who uprooted the *kaṭampu*² from the sea ! Long live the king who engraved his bow on the Himalayas ! Long live the *Poraiyan*³,

possessor of the beautiful and cool
Porunai! Long live
King Māntaraṇ-Cēral!’⁴
‘Surrounded by a group of playful
youths, some with
curly hair and some with tufts and some with
lispīng mouths
and coral lips, toddling some distance from
their homes,
he addressed them: “Young Brahmana
boys, if you can
recite the Vēda after me, you may go
away taking this
little bundle of jewels.”⁵ Then the son
of the famous
Brahmana Vārttikaṇ, by name
Ālamarcelvaṇ (Dakṣiṇā-
mūrti) whose rose lips still retained the
fragrance of his
mother’s milk, in the presence of his
playmates, with
prattling tongue and great inward
pleasure, recited

the Vēda, faultlessly observing the correct rhythm.

1 The impedimenta of an orthodox Brahmana. Kuṇḍikai may answer to what we call jāri still used by orthodox Brahmanas.

Kāṭṭam (kāṣṭha) are twigs of the sacred pipal used for havis in the fire.

2 See below, canto xxviii, ll. 135-6.

3 Poraiyan was a title of the Cēra kings.

4 Perhaps another name of Palyānaicelkelukuṭṭuvan. He was a contemporary ruler and chief of Kuṭṭanātu while Ceṇ-kuṭṭuvan was reigning in Vañci.

5 The Brahmana's love for the Vēda and his magnanimity in giving away valuable jewels to a child reciting it according to established practice show how unselfish were the learned Brahmanas of those golden days.

The elderly man was exceedingly pleased with young

Dakkinan and presented him with a sacred thread of

pearls and bright jewels, as well as with bangles and ear-

rings before he departed for his native place.

But the sentinels (of the locality) jealous of Vārttikai

because his child had been beautified and decorated with

fine ornaments, accused him saying : "This Brahmana has

misappropriated treasure-trove¹ which belongs legitimately

to the king." They then threw him into prison.

Kārttikai, the wife of Vārttikai, grew frantic. She

wept in grief.
She threw herself on to the ground rolling
and fulminating. Seeing this, the goddess
Durgā of

untarnished glory refused to open the door
of her temple

for the conduct of daily worship. When the
king of the

mighty spear heard that the massive door
remained shut

and would not open, he was confounded,
and inquired:

"Has any injustice been done?" Come and
tell me if

you have heard of any failure in the discharge
of our duties

to the Goddess of Victory". Then his young
messengers

made obeisance to the protecting king and informed him of
the case of Varttikāṇ. "This is not fair", burst forth the
king in anger and addressed Varttikāṇ: "It is your duty to
forgive me. My righteous rule still has life, though,
owing to the ignorance of my men, it has deviated from
the ordained path." The king granted⁸ him

Taṅkāḷ with

its paddy fields watered by tanks, and
Vayalūr of im-

1 All treasure-trove went of right to the king
and misappro-

priation was severely punished.

2

This shows the religious mind of the king and
his fear of

the obloquy of wielding an unrighteous sceptre.

3 Both Taṅkāḷ and the adjoining village of Vayalūr were
granted as a brahmadāya village by the king in order to appease
the wrath of the Brahmana and his lady.

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measurable yield, and prostrated himself¹ on
the ground before Vārttikan the husband of
Kārttikai, and in part appeased the unappeasable
wrath of the latter.

‘Then the door (of the shrine) of the Goddess who rode upon the stag, opened so loudly as to be heard throughout the long and broad streets of mountain-like mansions of that ancient city.

‘At that time, the triumphant king issued the following

proclamation by beating a drum placed upon the back of an elephant which was sent throughout the city :² “Release all prisoners from the prison. Remit all taxes from those who owe them. Let all who find unclaimed things and discover treasure-trove enjoy them.”

‘Listen how even such a king committed this act of injustice. There was a prediction that, in the month of *Āṭi*, on the *tithi* of *Aṣṭamī*, in the dark fortnight, on a Friday,³ with *Kārttikai* and *Paranī* (in the ascendent),⁴ a

1 Literally: ‘showed his chest to the damsel of this vast world.’ The commentator says that so far the king had not prostrated himself and hence the earth was raging with heat. But, now, that heat subsided a little. However the term *avaḥ* may

refer to Kārttikai and may mean her rage (which at the mis-

carriage of justice to her husband would not fully subside) sub- sided a little.

2 A general amnesty and remission of taxes; even treasure-trove became the property of the finder. The state relinquished its rights voluntarily. What affected a certain individual became a general law. Cf. Kuṛaļvenpā, 172.

3 The mention of the weekday scholars draw the conclusion that the

(Friday) has made some epic Cilappatikāram must

be a later composition on the ground that weekdays were unknown to India until the fourth century A.D. But this is arguing from one unknown to another unknown.

4 Aļalserkuṭṭam is Kārttikai and Paraṇi (see Puṇam., st. 229).

great fire would envelop renowned Madura to the ruin of

its king. (That has come to pass now).

‘Hear again, O lady of glittering bangles
! The kings
of mighty spears, Vasu and Kumara, who
ruled in an
exemplary manner with their armies, over the
good king-
dom of Kalinga encircled by a thick
grove, at Śinga-
puram¹ with its fair and fertile fields, and at
Kapilapuram
with its bamboo forests, became enemies,
being agnates,
though born in an ancient family of undying
prosperity.
And to a distance of six *Kāvadams*² all
round, owing to
their war, none could penetrate that
region. Then a
merchant, Śangaman by name, ambitious to
increase his
wealth, came with his wife, like people

escaping unnoticed,

bearing a great bundle on his head and began to dispose of

his valuable wares in a bazaar of Singapuram of undiminished glory.

‘O lady of gold bangles! Your husband, Kōvalan,

in his previous birth was called Barata,³ and being in the

service of this valorous monarch, had in disgust given up the vow (of non-killing)⁴. He mistook (Sangaman) for a spy,⁵ captured him, brought him to the presence of the king of the conquering spear and beheaded him. Nili,

the wife of the murdered Sangaman, finding

that she had

1 Simhapuram and Kapllapuram were cities of the ancient kingdom of Kalinga.

Vasu and Kumara, agnates, ruled over them. See Intro., p. 34.

2 The battlefield extended

to a distance of six katams all round.

3 Sans., Bharata.

4 Akimsā

or non-injury to any living creature.

5 This shows that the spy system was widely prevalent. For

a study of this institution see the Kauṭaliya

Arthaśāstra.

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no resting-place, wandered about the streets and court-

yards, and created a commotion proclaiming: "O king, is

this your justice? O Vaiśyas, is this justice? O com-

moners, is this justice? O residents of this place, is this

right?" She raved thus for fourteen days,
and exhilarated

by the thought that that was a sacred
day she ascended a
cliff in order to rejoin her murdered
husband in heaven,
and fell down cursing¹ thus :

"He who has inflicted this injury
upon us shall be
overtaken by the same fate."

"That unerring curse has now
descended upon thee."²

"This is my explanation.
Please listen. When
actions in a past birth by those devoid
of goodness yield
their results, no (amount of) penance
can stop them. O
lady of abundant tresses of hair,
after fourteen days³
thou shalt see thy wedded lover in the
form of a celestial

being, but never more in his earthly form.' When she

had finished explaining these things in the proper manner to the lady of chastity, the Goddess of Madura liberated the city from the conflagration.

Kaṇṇaki then said :

'I will not sit nor shall I stand till

I see the husband of my heart'; and she broke her gold

bangles at the temple of Korravai,⁴ and once again cried :

1 Nili's curse and its effect upon Kōvalan in this birth. See

Mañi., 'Vaṇcimānakarpukkakātai,' ll. 5-34, for this curse.

2 No amount of dharma in the present birth can stop the

laws of preordained fate. The actions of a previous birth yield their fruit in the next birth and, according to one theory, for several continued births if they be of a heinous nature.

3 See Clla., patikam, ll. 50-3.

4 Breaking the bangles was

a custom in vogue in ancient

times. Immediately after her husband's death,

the wife broke

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'I entered this city with my husband by the eastern gate. Alas! I am now going out alone through the western gate.'

Unconscious of day or night, she went helpless along one side of the flooded Vaikai. Dejected and sad, little thinking whether she was descending into a pit or ascending a cliff, she climbed step by step up the hill sacred to Neṭuval¹, the bearer of the long fiery lance, which tore out the bowels of the sea,² cut out the heart of the mountain,³ and vanquished Asuras: and there, under the shade of a flowery *vēnkai* grove, she pined saying: 'Alas, I am a great sinner.'

When fourteen days had thus passed, the king of gods,⁴ who with celestials regarded that day as fit for worship, praised the great name of this famous woman, showered unfading flowers upon her and revered her. In a divine chariot at the side of Kōvalan, murdered in the her bangles, this being the first sign of her widowhood.

Kaṇṇaki did this before the Durgā temple. It is interesting that this custom

still prevails among certain communities in Southern India.

1 Arumpatavuraiāciriya identifies this with Tiruccēṅkōṭu, which is not probable. Personal inquiry about any local tradition of a Kaṇṇaki temple there proved fruitless. This hill must therefore be one which was at a distance of fourteen days' walk from Madura to the west.

To venture a conjecture it may be the Palni range containing a sacred shrine of Subrahmanya.

2 A reference to the vanquishing by the war-god of the Asura hiding in the sea.

This tradition still exists in association with the

Subrahmanya shrine at Tirruccendur in Tinnevely district. The story runs that after vanquishing the Asura, Subrah- manya departed for Tirupparankunram in Madura district where he married Dēvayāni, the daughter of Indra.

3 This refers to the piercing of the Krauñca hill.

4 It is said that Indra in person took her to Heaven—a rare honour reserved only for women of chastity.

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king's city, Kaṇṇaki with the forest-like hair went up to heaven.

VENPĀ

Because it is a fact that gods will worship her who worships not God but worships her husband,¹ Kaṇṇaki, that jewel among the women of the earth, became a goddess and the

guest of the ladies of heaven.

EPILOGUE

Thus ends the Maturaikkāṇṭam which describes the virtues, victories, and heroism of the dynasty of the Pāṇṭyas, who held the distinguished spear in their hands among the dynasties of the three crowned monarchs. It also describes the great glory attached to their ancient and famous capital, the richness of their festivals, the approach of the gods to the city, the unfailing happiness of the village communities, the abundance of their rich foodstuffs, the fertility yielded by the great Vaikāṇṭha river, the neverfailing fresh showers supplied by the rain-bearing clouds, the two *viruttis* called *ārapaṇi*² and *sāttuvati*,³ and the songs and dances in which these were exhibited. These and many other things, illustrative of the unmatched rule of righteousness of the Pāṇṭyan Naṇṇūceliyan⁴, who van-

1 Cf. Kuraṭṭaṇṇā, 55.

2 Ārapaṭṭi (Ārabhaṭṭi)—'a kind of drama having for its topic the acquisition of wealth and centering round the achievements

of great warriors as heroes, one of the four nāṭakaviruttis' (Tamil Lexicon, p. 242).

See also Cila., canto lil. 1. 13, comment.

3 Sāttuvadi (sātvati)—'a variety of dramatic composition

which has a semi-divine being for hero and treats of virtue, one

of the four nāṭakaviruttis' (Ibid., p. 1362).

4 This Pāṇṭyan king who was a contemporary of Cēraṇ

Seṅkuṭṭuvan is called Aralāṇ-kattilluṇṇaiya

Pāṇṭya-Netuṇṇaiya.

quished the army of the northern Aryas, and established peace in the southern Tamil country, and who again slept eternal sleep seated on the throne with his queen of fault-less chastity, are described.

We have other kings whose names were prefixed by Pāṇṭyan

Ilavantikaippaḷḷituṇṇiya Naṇmāraṇ, Pāṇṭyan Cīttiramaṭattu-tuṇṇiya Naṇmāraṇ, etc. The term 'tuṇṇiya' in these contexts means, simply, 'dead'. In order to distinguish the one name from the other it was probably then a tradition to prefix to each king's name the place where he died. It is said that the Saṁudira dynasty ruling at Calicut continues this custom of naming themselves. See Puṇaṇṇūru, p. 581 n.

III. VANCIK KANTAM

CANTO XXIV

KUNRAK KURAVAI

OR

THE DANCE OF THE HILL-MAIDENS

URAIPPĀṬṬUMATAI

THE hill-maidens spoke thus : 'We came to
the hillside to

scare away little birds and drive off parrots,
to sport in

the waterfalls and plunge into springs;¹
and while

wandering about with no other concern, we
saw a lady and

asked her : "O lady, who lookest like Valli,
who art thou

that standest in the shade of the fragrant
mountain tree,

vēṅkai, after losing thy breast and breaking
our hearts?"

(Kaṇṇaki) coolly replied : "I am she whose
cruel destiny

it was to lose her husband on that evil day

when ever-joyous

Madura and its king were fated to be ruined." Hearing

this, the hill-maidens were struck with awe and worshipped

her with their bangled hands uplifted, and the gods showered flowers like copious rain.'

The maidens continued: 'In our presence and in that

of other hillfolk she was taken to Heaven by the gods with her husband.

There is no deity like her for our community, O people of small hamlets!² O people of small

1 Here we are introduced to the daily life of the hill-men

and women. They were devotees of Murukan, the god of the kūrīñci region. Valli is the consort of this god.

2 Śrīkuṭi as opposed to Perumkuṭi.

This indicates that
their residences were simple in character.

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hamlets! Let us acclaim this lady as our
Goddess, O people

of small hamlets! Under the cool shade
of the *vēṇkai*

whose odorous flower-buds (grow) on the
slopes of the

hill with enchanting waterfalls, acclaim this
deity, O people

of small hamlets! Play upon the *tonṭakam*,¹
beat the little

drum, blow the horn, and ring the noisy
bell, sing the

kuriñci,² offer spicy incense, perform the
sacrifice of

flowers, and erect the surrounding wall with its door, hymn

songs of praise and scatter flowers—all in honour of this

lady who has lost one of her breasts—so that the great

hill may, without diminution, flourish in plenty.’³

KOLUCCOL

Then began the song. (The maid said to the lady):⁴

‘Dear girl of beautiful ornaments! You will not see

anything there, (come and) see what is here. The moun-

tain-stream comes bubbling along, as beautiful as Indra’s

bow, mixed with the black powder of añjana, the yellow

powder of aritāra and the red

powder of *sintura* (vermi-

1 A kind of musical instrument now gone out of use. This

and the mention of similar instruments like the drum, the horn

and the bell show that music formed an essential part of prayer.

2 A song appropriate to the hilly region. It may be noted that the ancient Tamils developed peculiar modes of music according to the geographical environment land. There was *pālai* music, *neytal* music, so on.

of the whole Tamil *marutam* music, and

3 *Kaṇṇaki* was first adopted as a deity by the hill-maidens,

and then by the important kings of South India. A shrine was built for her.

4 The words of the maid to the heroine. When the hill-

maidens began bathing in the waterfalls, their thoughts turned

towards their lovers who were at that time

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separated from them.

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lion). We shall go and bathe in it.
Let us bathe, friend;
let us bathe.

‘Though the lord of the hill who enjoyed
us has depart-

ed from us, saying “Give up your fears”, shall
we bathe in

the stream that comes from the hill surrounded
by a misty

grove? We find no reason, do we, to be
displeased at the

fresh floods which come after embracing the
rocks of his

mountain?¹ O, it is only with the fresh
stream which

comes after embracing the hillock that we
shall play: with

whom else should we play, dear friend?

'We can see no single reason to vex
our hearts

at the new floods which come after sporting
with the gold

of the hill, do we? O, it is only with the
fresh floods

that come after sporting with the gold of (our
lord's) hill

we shall frolic: with whom else should we
frolic, dear
friend?

'We do not see anything that should vex
our hearts,

do we?—at this new stream which brings the
flower-buds

of his mountain? O, it is only with this new
stream which

brings his mountain flower-buds that we shall
play. With

whom else should we play, O my friend?

PATTUMATAI

'O girl of sweet words! We have
been sporting,
diving deep into pure water till our
collyrium-eyes became
red, praying to (Subrahmanya)²
the wielder of the strong

1 The lord of the mountain is the hero.
The poet hints
that the stream (a lady) embraces this mountain
of which their
hero is the lord. But the maiden says that they
need not be
jealous of this action on the part of the stream.

2

After bathing to the accompaniment of singing
and danc-

ing, these girls prayed to their god Murukan that they might be
married.

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deadly spear, and engaging ourselves in
Come along, friend, let us sing.

kuravai (dance).

‘O! This is indeed the spear wielded by the
deity who
never deserts the highly renowned Centil,¹
Ceṅkōtu,² the
white hill (Venkunram)³ and Ērakam⁴—the
white, shin-
ing, leaf-shaped spear, which put an end
to (the Asura)
Sūra (in the form of a) mango-tree,⁵
in olden days, by
chasing him into the sea surrounding the earth.

‘O! This is indeed the spear held aloft
by the match-
less deity with six faces⁶ and twelve
arms; this is the
shining spear wherewith (the God) riding
the peacock
(*pinimukam*)⁷ and celebrated by the king of
the celestials,

1 The identification of Centil with Svāmimalai, by the annotator, seems to be wrong in the light of Ērakam being called Svāmimalai by Aruṇakīri-svāmigaḷ. Naccinārkkīṇiyar in his commentary ('Muruku', st. 189) perhaps followed the Arumpa-tavurai. Centil is Tiruccentūr, the famous Subrahmaṇya shrine in Tirunelveli district.

2 Seven miles from Sankaridroog railway station, and twenty-two miles from Nāmakkal, Salem District. The place is also noted for an Ardhanārīśvara temple containing a shrine of Viṣṇu in the same compound. (See Dikshitar, Purāṇa, p. 71).

The Matsya

3 The identification of this shrine is not yet established.

4 Ērakam is Svāmimalai, seven miles from Kumbakonam railway station in Thanjavoor District, situated

on the northern
bank of the Kāvēri. The god enshrined goes by
Svāminātha.

the name of

5 The present village of Maṇappāṭu, about
eight miles from

Tiruccentūr, is supposed to be another form of the
original name

Māpāṭu, and is connected by tradition with the
Asura Śūra.

6 Śaṇmukham of Sanskrit literature.

7 Piṇimukam may also refer to an elephant
(see Paripāṭal,
st. 5). The reference is to a dēvāsura yuddha ending in
of Indra, the king of Heaven.

the victory

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vanquished the Asura enemies and destroyed
their great-ness.

•O ! This is indeed the spear
decorating the lovely hands
of him who was suckled by six mothers in the
lotus-bed of
the Śaravaṇaī pool (Śaravaṇappūmpaṇḍi);¹ this is the long
spear that destroyed the Krauñca mountain, after cleaving
the breast of the Asura who had that hill for his residence.’²

PĀṬṬUMATAI³

‘O good girl with bracelets ! I am moved
to laughter. To cure me of the (love) sickness
caused by the owner of the cool hill on which
pepper grows,⁴ my mother who is not aware of
the idle talk in the village (*alar*) thinks that
(the spirit of) Kaṭampan⁵ (Murukan) has
manifested⁶ itself in me,
and has sent for the Vēlan’s⁶ (exorcist)
veriyāṭal,⁷ intending to abjure it.

‘O good girl with the lovely bangles !
This again provokes my laughter !
If the exorcist who is appointed to deliver
me from love-sickness caused by the lord of

1 Cf. Tirumurugāṟṟu, ll. 253-5. This is a

favourite legend

found in every Mahāpurāṇa, dealing with the birth of this war-god.

2 Cf. Maṇi., canto v, l. 13.

3 These also are the words of the heroine to her maid,

evidently after prayer to their favourite deity.

4 The chief produce of the hill consisted of cane and pepper.

5 One of the Tamil names for Subrahmaṇya.

6 Another Tamil name of the same deity.

7 It is a kind of dance performed to cure a man possessed

of an evil spirit. The Vēlaṇ invokes the aid of Subrahmaṇya and

is possessed by the God's spirit and thus exorcises the bad spirit

out of the victim.

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these mountains, comes, that exorcist is a fool. If

Murukan will manifest Himself then He will be a greater

fool, even though He destroyed the Krauñca mountain.

‘O good girl with the serrated bracelets! This also

provokes laughter in me. If the exorcist appointed to

remove the love-sickness caused by the chieftain of the

hill of exceeding fragrance, comes, that exorcist is a fool,

If the son of Siva, seated under the banyan tree¹ manifests

Himself then He will be a greater fool.

‘O good girl with the choice ornaments! This further

provokes my laughter. To expel my severe sickness caused

by the embrace of the lord of this mountain, if

the exorcist.

comes, he is a fool indeed. And if my deity
who wears

the garland of *kaṭappam*,² and the wintry
blossoms, mani-

festes Himself, He is much more a fool than
the exorcist.

appointed to drive away my sickness.'

PĀṬṬUMATAI³

(The maid replied) :

'The son of the god seated under the
banyan tree

(Śiva) will come (riding) his peacock with
his consort to

the courtyard where the appointed exorcist
will perform

the *veriyāṭal*.⁴ When he comes, we shall ask
his blessing

on our marriage with the lord of this great
mountain.⁵

Cf. Kalittokai, st. 81-3, Mañl., canto III, l. 144.
The

Dakṣiṇāmūrti form of Śiva is alluded to.

2 This flower blossoms during the rainy season.

3 Now follows the reply of the maid to the heroine. In~

variably we notice the plural form used by the maid in all love-

themes in Tamil literature. The idea underlying this is that the

maid identifies herself with the heroine.

4 Cf. Puṇam, st. 22.

5 The reference is to the gāndharva form of marriage.

‘O son of the god of Kailāsa hill !’

We worship Your

feet that look like red *asoka* flowers, and
also the youth-

ful daughter of the mountain folk, who
has a crescent-
like forehead of the peacock's hue. We
beseech you
to give us the hero in (a form of) marriage
other than that
sanctioned by Brahmā.²

'We worship your two feet, O son
of the daughter
of the mountain (Pārvatī)³, with Valli of the
crescent-fore-
head, the youthful daughter of the
Kuravas⁴ dwelling in
this our ancient mountain. O great god!
Make our hero
marry so that it may be known unto many.

'She is a Kurava lady. She is of
our community.
With her we worship your two feet, you of
the six faces!
May he, who touched your two holy feet
and promised
to wed me, be blessed with a good

marriage, and be rid
of a disapproved union.'⁵

1 Legend has it that the abode of Siva is
hill, and hence Siva is known as Kailasavāsi.

Kailāsa, the divine

2 The reference here is to the prajāpatya
form of marriage,
which shows that all the eight forms
of marriage prescribed by
Hindu law-codes were by this time known to the
Tamil land.

3 For the legend see the Matsya Purāṇa.
daughter of Himavān and Mēnā.

Umā is the

4 The Kuravas are a primitive tribe living
among hills and
mountains from prehistoric times.
They still linger in small
numbers leading the lives of nomads.

5 Here we see that the hero and heroine had already had a
clandestine union of which there was idle talk among the
villagers. There was fear on the part of the maid that if her

parents came to know of it, she would be taken to task. We seem to read in these stanzas the disadvantages of kaṭaviyal and the benefits of karpiyal. See Nālaṭiyār, st. 86.

KUNRAKKURAVAI

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PĀṬṬUMATAI

‘When we were singing thus, the lord of our mountain wearing a gorgeous garland, overheard us with sympathy keeping himself hidden.’ Before he would depart, I went up to him, touched his revered feet with my hands and stood praying to him. Long live you, friend, and listen to

what I said (to him).

'You came to this village wearing
a *kaṭampa* garland
and wielding a spear, for the sake of
our damsel. But
you have neither six faces nor a magnificent
peacock; nor
have you the Kurava girl (Vaiḷi). Nor do
you possess the
Lord's well-knit shoulders. The people
of these small
hamlets will not recognize you as the
god who is the
wearer of the *kaṭampa* garland. Verily, they
are ignorant.
folk.'

PĀṬṬUMATAI

'Thus then, having heard what I told
him of the idle
talk in our village, he became sad at
heart, but quietly
went away. It is likely that the lord of this mountain

country will (soon) marry you.

‘We shall sing an appropriate song in honour of the chaste lady who is worshipped by many, who was shown her husband by groups of several Devas and who destroyed the glory of ancient Madura with her breast.

‘We shall sing; come, live

you long, friend; we shall

sing.

1 What follows is the narration by the mald of what had

happened when she was making the above remarks. The mald

noticed that the hero was overhearing their conversation, and

finding him slip away, she ran to him and requested him to marry the heroine in public. She noticed signs of sympathy on his part and opined that the proposed marriage would soon take place.

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‘We shall sing; come, live you long, friend; we shall sing.

‘We shall sing in praise of her who burnt the city of Kūṭal of the tall mansions when its

righteous rule vanished. When we sing in praise of her who burnt (Madura), we shall (also) pray for the hand of the lord of these mountains in an honourable wedding.¹

With sympathy the chaste ladies praise and worship the pretty lady (Kannaki) in this fertile field of ours. Even after the Dēvas had with extolment restored this pretty lady (Kannaki) to her husband, they did not cease magnifying her greatness.

‘Praised and worshipped by the Dēvas of the celestial regions, the lady who stood under the sweet-smelling *vēṅkai* of the forest-she who stood in the shade of the *vēṅkai* of the forest-attained her abode along with her husband in Heaven from which she will not be sent back.

If we sing in praise of her who will not be sent back from Heaven,² this village will also be granted a similar boon.³

‘O, our village is blessed with a great

boon! It is blessed with a great boon. This village which is to witness the marriage of our lady of gold bangles with her husband, is blessed.

1 In anticipation of the early consummation of marriage

the maid advised the heroine to worship the new deity, the Lady of Chastity, and be blessed by her, in the belief that Her blessing would not be in vain.

2 She has attained, in philosophical language, nirvāṇa.

3 The implication is that the blessing of the Lady of Chastity would not only benefit a particular individual but the whole community.

KUNRAKKURAVAI

329

‘In this way, while we were singing the song of praise for boons received, witnessing our *kuravai* dance¹ and our *koṇṭunilai*² song, our lover would come to this very place by His

blessing and enjoy the drink (of heroes). May he, the chief of the western country (Kuṭaku)³ who carved the bow-emblem on the Himalays and ruled the Kolli⁴ (in the south) live many days in happiness !

1 This canto shows that kuravai was of different kinds of which at least two are mentioned in the Cilappatikāram. That which was performed by the women of the cowherds was in honour of Viṣṇu, and that by the Hill-maidens in honour of Murukan. We notice differences in their technique.

2 Koṭṭunilai is a kind of ceyyul or song sung apparently to the accompaniment of the kuravai dance. This is evident from the Kalittokai, st. 39, and the commentary thereon.

3 The term kuṭavar-ko is important, and stands for the king of the western region of the Tamil land. It is worth noting that the ancient poets divided the whole Tamil land into three regions—west, east and south. At the head of the

eastern region was the Cōḷa, the Kuṇavar-kō, and of the south was the Pāṇṭya. Tēnnavar-kō (See Patirru., st. 55 for the use of the term kuṇavar-kō).

4 The Caṅkam classics refer to Kolli in their addresses to the Cera (see, for example, Puṇanānūru, st. 22; Akanānūru., st. 209; Patirru., st. 73). From this we can deduce that the Kolli-malai formed an important portion of the ancient Cera kingdom.

C—36

CANTO XXV KATCIK KATAI

OR

THE DECISION TO MARCH NORTH

WHEN the prince of the powerful sword, the son of the Cera,¹ who to the astonishment of the Dēvas, destroyed the *kaṭampu* fenced in by the deep sea, and who carved his bow-emblem on the

Himalayas, stayed

happily in his silver-white palace beside
the (artificial)

fountain, with his consort Iṣāṅkō-Vēṇmālī,²
he expressed

a desire to go and see the mountain,
whose groves were

surrounded by clouds, and the music of
whose waterfalls

resembled an ever-sounding tabor.

Thereupon he left the neighbourhood of
Vaṇci accom-

panied by a large retinue of women
spread over an

extensive route so that he appeared like
Indra of the

mighty spear, who desirous of sporting
with the divine

damsels dwelling in the grove, rich in
the wealth of

1 Akam., st. 127, 347. The reference is to
Cāralātaṇ. See

patikam. Cf. Akam., st. 396. The Cēra line is mythically traced to Heaven.

2 Seṅkuṭṭuvan's queen. It would appear that she belonged to the line of Vēḷir who reigned in later days from Koṭumpālūr in the Pudukottai State. (See Pudukkottai Inscriptions. Also Ep.

Rep., No. 315 of 1903, and 1908, pp. 87-9.) Similar names Iruk-
kuvēḷ, Iruṅkōvēḷ and Iḷankōvēḷ are found in the inscriptions. The

Koṭumpālūr line is a branch of the ancient Vēḷir dynasty that was flourishing in the days of the Caṅkam epoch (see M. Raghava

Aiyangar, Cēraṅ-Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, p. 24, and Cēravāntar taya-valakku, pp. 35-6).

his flowers, mounted his great elephant (Airāvata)¹ and spread his retinue over a

distance of one hundred and forty *yōjanas*, in a region of golden-flowered trees, wide stretching river-banks, islets set in sparkling waters, groves edged with young trees, play-houses and assembly halls.

With his suite he reached the bank spread with fine

sand dunes from the Pēriyār river,² which falls from the

great mountain and appears like a garland on the breast

of Viṣṇu. Its flowing waters were covered with fully

blossomed *koṅku*, *vēṅkai*, *koṅrai* in overhanging clusters,

as well as with *nākam*, *tilakam*, and fragrant *āram*, around

which swarms of bees and beetles were murmuring their

sweet songs. Here he stayed at ease.

Everywhere could be heard the songs of the hill-women

accompanying the dances proper to each region, the music

of the priest^a (Vēlanpāṇi) in honour of the victorious God

of the red lance, the *vaiḷḷai* song sung to the pounding of

the grain, the shrill shouting of the guards in the *tiṇai*-

fields, the clamour of the Kuṟavar as they broke open honey-combs, the heavy drum-beat of waterfalls, the trumpeting of elephants attacking tigers, the loud high-

1 Indra's elephant.

2 This is Ponnāṇi (Sanskrit, Pūrṇavāhini) which takes its source in the Anaimalai Hills. See Pandit R. Raghava Aiyangar's *Vaṅjlmānakar*, p. 54.

3 Here are depicted the customs and the habits of the hill people. Their priest was named Vēlan. They trapped elephants and gathered honey. In addition to ordinary watchmen it appears that there were guard-stations, made by erecting huts in the thick branches of lofty trees where men were stationed to raise a hue and cry whenever they anticipated danger from wild animals or their enemies.

pitched voices of the watchmen (*sēṇōṇ*) in
their lofts, the

noises of mahouts as they trapped elephants in
the *kheda*,

besides the clangour of his promenading army.

Then there appeared before him the hill-folk like
vanquished kings,¹ laden with tribute, awaiting his
audience in the court at flourishing Vañci, rich in
rare articles. They came carrying on their heads such
presents² as: the white tusks of elephants, loads of *akil*,
whisks of deer-hair, pots of honey, chips of sandalwood,
lumps of red *sindura*, loads of *añjana* and beautiful *aritāra*,
cardamom stalks, pepper stalks,

kūvainūru (arrowroot

flour), luxuriant *kavalai*, ripe cocounts, delicious mangoes,
garlands of green leaves (*paccilai*), jack-fruits, garlic,
sugarcane, flowery creepers, rich bunches of areca-nuts from
luxuriant palms, bunches of the big variety of sweet plan-
tains, *āḷi* cubs, lion cubs, tiger cubs,
phants, young monkeys, bear cubs,

young rutting ele-
varuṭai deer that

roam the hillsides, fawns of the timid deer,
fawns of the

musk deer, harmless little mongooses,
peacocks with

beautiful feathers, *nāvi* kittens (civet cats),
wild hens, and

parrots with their honeyed words.

They said: 'We have been your
slaves for seven

generations. Long live your prowess!
Under the forest

vērikai tree a lady with a breast plucked
out, suffered un-

equalled distress; but celebrated by celestials
she ascended

to Heaven. The celestials praised her.
We do not know

which is her native place, and whose
daughter she is.

1 This demonstrates that there were a
number of tributary

kings to the Cēra, who was the *de facto* overlord

of the Tamil

country. It appears that the tributes were generally paid in kind.

Cf. Perumkatai, Bk. I, ch. lviii. ll. 83-99.

2 Here we are furnished with a list of fauna and flora of the mountain.

KATCIK KATAI

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But we know that she came to your country. May your line last for several hundred years !

Thereat the great Tamil scholar Śattan,¹ who had been witnessing with wonder and joy (all that was happen- ing), addressed the king, the delight of the world and the wielder of the long spear, thus : 'Listen, O great and powerful king ! I shall tell you what happened to the lady of lustrous bangles, and to her dear husband, as a result of an ill-fated anklet. I will also tell you how that beautiful women took her anklet and pleaded before the king of

powerful troops, and also how the great and ancient city of Madura was razed by the rising flames from the undeveloped breast of that great lady of chastity, who threw her fair anklet before the queen and left her in wrath declaiming thus: "O lady of the five-plaited hair! Know this: 'The Pāṇṭyan king, who sat on the lion-throne wearing Lakṣhmī in his breast, fainted and died, unable to resolve the perplexity of the lady of flower-wreaths.'" Without waiting to hear Kaṇṇaki's heroic words in full but not uneasy in mind although unable to support her great sorrow, the noble queen touched his flowery feet and fell dead, saying: "Let me go the way my lord has gone"—as if her soul sought the departed one.

‘As if it were her intention to point out to you, and to tell you, O mighty king, the nature of the injustice perpetrated by the powerful Pāṇṭyan, (Kaṇṇaki) came to your kingdom, not (wishing) to return alone to her own

1 Cīttalai Cāttanār, the author of the epic Maṇimēkalai. Here is unquestionable internal evidence that Śāttanār and Iṅgō- Aṭikaḷ were contemporaries, and that both the Maṇimēkalai and the Cilappatikāram are not romances but are historical documents

portraying contemporary political and social life in the Tamil land.

Cāttan was an eye-witness to what happened in Mīdara.

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native place. O king, may your rule of great fame prosper from aeon to aeon!"¹

When he heard of the cruel deed of the king of the Pāṇṭyan country, the Cēra, the king of kings, was anguish-ed and said: 'Before these words, which well deserve condemnation from any monarch of our status, reached our ears, it is good that the Pāṇṭyan laid down his

life. For it is the departing soul of the king that has straightened the righteous sceptre,² which was bent by this irresistible act of destiny.

‘If rains fail, great havoc is caused (to the country).

If living beings suffer unrighteousness, widespread fear

is caused. Paying due regard to the welfare of his subjects, and wary of tyrannical rule, a protecting king³ born

of a noble line occupies a position which is but suffering

and is not to be sought after.’

The king spoke thus gracefully to the learned poet

who had graphically narrated the tale of woe, and said to

his queen: ‘One chaste lady lost her life in peace when her

husband died. The other in wrath came to our kingdom.

Of these two, O fascinating lady, speak, who is better ?'

1 Cf. *Maduraikkañci*, 1. 194.

2 In simple words : hitherto the sceptre had been straight-

but an unjust act made it bend. The king's voluntary death, how,

ever, removed the stigma attached to it and made it once more a righteous sceptre.

3 The responsibilities of a king are emphasized here by the author. These lines follow the Sanskrit law-codes where the king

is ordained to discharge his duties without any regard to rights.

The ancient kings did their duty first and then claimed their right.

Even an autocratic ruler like Rāvaṇa followed *svadharma*. (Rāmāyaṇa, 'Yud', ch. lxiii.)

When the monarch said this, the great queen

replied :¹ 'Let the (Pāṇṭyan) queen whose soul departed before she experienced the agony of surviving her husband, enjoy the great bliss of Heaven! And let this Goddess of Chastity who has come to our extensive country be duly honoured.'

The king with the garlanded white umbrella, approved these words and turned towards his learned councillors when they said : 'Either from the Potiyil hills of immortal renown, or from the great Himalayas where the bow- emblem has been carved, a stone should be brought to fashion her image. Both are equally sacred because one is washed by the floods of the Kāverī and the other by the holy Ganges.'

The monarch replied : 'It is no matter for felicitation if kings born in my family of great swords and high valour, be satisfied merely with picking up a stone from the Potiyil hills and cleansing it in the waters of the ancient Kāverī.² If the king of the high mountains

(Himalayas),
where live the twice-born³ Brahmanas⁴
distinguishable by their matted locks of hair,
undried garments, three-stringed

1 This shows that the queen also took part in
the delibera- tions of the State.

We know from the Rāmāyaṇa that Maṇṭōtari
went to Rāvaṇa's court after the death of Prahasta,
and dissuaded

him by several arguments from fighting Rāmā.
(See Dikshitar,

Hindu Administrative Institutions, p. 160).

2 This proves beyond doubt that a part of the
Kāvēri region belonged to the Cēra Kingdom. It
may be noted that the Kāvēri

which is seven miles from Vañclkkaruvūr is as
much the Cēra river as it is the Coḷa.

3 Dvījas of Sanskrit literature.

4 Some of the habits and customs of
Brahmanas are men-
tioned here.

sacred threads on their chests,
and the strength of their

three sacrificial fires, does not give us the
stone needed

to carve an image of the great Lady of
Chastity, then we,

wearing our *vañci* garland from the south,
shall demonstrate

to those who have survived those already
dead, the insta-

bility (*kāñci*)¹ of infamous lives which do not pursue the
ordained path, the bridal *kāñci*² indicative of the giving in
marriage of the ever-youthful girl (Uma) born in the
ancient family to the moon-crested Dēva (Śiva), and the
great *kāñci*³ to the opposing northern (king). We shall
deprive him (the Himalayas) of his high crown, resplen-
dent like the moon, and shining with a victory-giving
garland of *mandāra* flowers strung together with full-blown
vēñkai blossoms. We shall look to all this.'

With these words, he adorned his

elephant-soldiers.

with *vañci* garlands, celebrating the auspicious day when

the umbrella was taken out (*kutainilaivañci*),⁴ the glorious

success of the Cēra (*korraivañci*),⁵ the high distinction

of earning the perpetual title the *mahārājya*,⁶ the great and

1 This is *kāñci-tiṇai*, a major theme describing a warrior

defending his position, wearing a garland of *kāñci* flowers. (See

Tolk., 'Puraṭ', sūtra 24).

2 *M akaṭpār Kāñci*.

See Pura., *veṇpāmālai* iv, st. 24.

3 *Etirūṇṇṭal* is 'to take a firm stand for making an attack'

(Tamil Lexicon p. 525). Cf. *Pinkalantai* 'Vaṭkār'—*etirūṇṇal* (*kāñci*).

'Theme of a king sending the royal umbrella in advance

In an auspicious hour before he actually sets out on an expedi-

tion' (Pura., venpāmālai iii, st. 3). See also Tamil Lexicon.

5 'Theme extolling a king who destroyed his foes with his

sword' (Pura., venpāmālai iii, st. 7).

Mārāyavañci is a theme indicating the status of overlordship after vanquishing the enemy. See Tolk., 'Purai', sūtra 8, comm. by Iṭampūraṇar:

cf, Pura., venpāmālai iii, st. 11).

KATCIK KATAI

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glorious *vañci* (*peruvañci*)¹ victory, and the unmatched fame achieved by the supply of large quantities of food (*perumcōrruvañci*)² and lastly, the triumphant *vallai* of everlasting glory (*korra_vallai*).³ He made his war-attired

army wear garlands of
unbroken palmyra leaves, and exhorted them
saying: 'Outside the golden city of un-
flowering Vañci⁴, we shall wear the vañci
garlands⁵ so that
they may keep company with our fierce swords.'

Villavan Kōtai (his minister), then addressed the
king: 'May your righteous rule last many years! You
fought against your equals who surrendered their tiger-
flag and fish-flag on the bloody battlefield of
Konkan.⁶
stationed

This (incident) has reached the ears of elephants
in the eight directions.⁷ My eyes will
never forget the sight of your advancing elephant in the
midst of Tamil hosts which destroyed the joint forces of

1. Peruvañci is yet another theme (Pura.. veppamālai iii, st.
22) treating of setting fire to the enemy's country.

2 Perumcōrruvañci is what the Tolkāppiyam styles perum-cōrrunilai; 'Porul', 63. (See also Pura., veppamālai iii, st. 23.) It is a theme treating of a king feasting his soldiers sumptuously on the eve of a battle.

3 Korravaḷḷai is 'a theme indirectly describing the prowess of a king by regretting that the enemy's country will be destroyed' (Tamil Lexicon, p. 1167). See Pura., veppamālai iii, st. 7; also Tolk., 'Puraḷ', sūtra 8.

4 Cf. Pura., st. 100; also st. 22 and st. 27.

5 Here is a pun on the word vañci. The city is ever young and can never become old on account of the monarch's prowess.

6 The Cēra defeated the Pāṇṭya and the Cōla monarchs and became the overlord of the Tamil country.

7 Diggajas of Sanskrit mythology.

C—37

338 CILAPPATIKĀRAM

Konkaṇar, Kalingar, the cruel Karuṇaṭar, Bangalar,¹ Gaṇgar, Kaṭṭiyar² famous for their innumerable spears, and the northern Aryas.

'Nor can we forget the valour you displayed single-handed, when having made

your mother bathe in the full and rising floods of the mighty Ganges,³ you waged such a terrific war against a thousand Aryas, that the cruel God of Death stood aghast.

‘If you now propose to extend the Tamil sway over the entire region fenced in by the roaring sea, there will be none in the whole world who can stop you from doing it. So send a message to the following effect : “The object with which our king goes to the Himalayas is to bring a stone on which to carve the image of a deity.” Seal it with your clay seal⁴ bearing the designs of the strong bow, the fish

1 The enemy kings of the Cera king. The Bangalar are probably the people of Bengal. The Gangar may be the early Gangas.

2 The Kaṭṭis seemed to have occupied the region, south of Vaṭukarpūmi. They are frequently mentioned in the Akanāṅṁuru (st. 44 and st. 226) and also in Kuruntokai, st. 11.

3

This shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ had already been to North India once and shown his prowess. From a vague reference in the Puraṇāṅṁuru (st. 62 and 63) that when Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ's father and others fell slain in battle their women also committed sati, it is argued that this expedition of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ was to secure a stone on which to carve an image of his mother. Against this theory must be set the fact that (1) there is no implicit reference to the sati of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṅ's mother, (2) that there is no reference, explicit or implied, of a stone for an image, and (3) that according to Arumpatavuraiāciriyar it pilgrimage for a sacred bath. means that she was taken on a

4 Note the use of the clay seal for letters of administrative importance. It is of interest that similar seals have been dis-

covered among the recent pre-historic finds in the
Indus valley.

KATCIK KATAI

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and the tiger, emblems of the Tamil country,
and send it to all the kings of the north.'

Thareupon Aḷumpilvā!¹ replied:

'The spies of all countries situated in
the cool shade of

the *nāval* tree (i.e. *Jambūdvīpa* or India)
never leave the

borders of our protecting (capital) Vañci.²
Will not these

spies send information to their respective
kings famous for

elephants with ornamental trappings? So,
it will be

enough if we proclaim (your expedition) by
tom-tom in

our own city.'

The king of the troop irresistible in

battle (Ceṅkuṭṭu-

van) agreed. When he reached the
glorious unfadable

city of Vañci, rich with tribute obtained
from expeditions

against enemies, it was proclaimed throughout
that magni-

ficent city by
the beat of a drum carried on the nape of
the strong elephant of state. ²

‘Long live our gracious king! May he
protect the

world from age to age. Because our
guardian monarch

marches forth to procure a stone from the
great Himalayas

inscribed with the bow-emblem, all ye who
are kings of

the northern countries, come forth
to meet him with

tributes. Save yourselves,
by remembering (before it

is too late) the heroic exploit of our monarch
who overthrew

1 Aļumpilvēļ was apparently a Vēļir
chieftain of a small

area called Aļumpil.

In this sense the word occurs in Caņkam
works like the Akanānūru, st. 44 and
Maturaikkāñci, ll. 344-5.

2 This proves
the extensive nature of the spy system explained
in the Kauṭaliya Arthaśāstra and the Tirukkuraļ.

3 A feature of dharma-yuddha, (the dharma-vijaya of the
Arthaśāstra and of Aśokan inscriptions). This was to inform
everyone concerned beforehand.

the *kaṭampu* of the sea,¹ and his equally heroic deed of carving the bow-emblem on the Himalayan slopes.² If you will not listen, abandon your wives and lead the lives of anchorites. Long live the army,³ precious as his own face to the king who wears victorious anklets.⁴

1 See above, canto xxiii, ll. 81-2.

2 There is a special reference to Ceṅkuttuvan's planting the emblem of the bow on the Himalayas in the *Cirupāṇāruppaṭal*, ll. 47-50.

3 The term *śeṇāmukham* is a Sanskrit expression and means generally a division of an army. In military literature it may also mean a division of the army consisting of three elephants, three chariots, nine horsemen and fifteen footmen.

KALKOT KATAI

OR

BRINGING THE STONE

AFTER the tom-tom¹ had been sounded, the king mounted his ancestral lion-throne when the *purōhita*,² the chief astrologer, the celebrated ministers, and army commanders gathered together and blessed him : 'Long live our king of kings.' They requested him to indicate to them the royal intention (to march) in the (northern) direction.

The Cera of the white umbrella,

which rose higher
than that of all the rival kings of
great armies,
declared publicly thus: 'If the remarks of
the kings of
the north, who lead insecure lives,
communicated to me
by saints residing in the Himalayas, when they
came here,
are to be passed over in silence, that will cause
humiliation
to kings such as ourselves. So, if my
unfailing sword
does not successfully help me to make the
northern kings
carry on their crowned heads the stone on
which the deity's
image is to be carved, and if I fail to
strike terror into the
hearts of my enemy-kings who are ardently
war-like and
who wear glittering anklets, may I become

the wielder

1 See below, canto xxix, 'Uralppāṭṭumaṭai'.

2 The purōhita was an important limb of the State and was

a member of the ministry. This reminds us of the status he

occupied in the Arthaśāstra polity, where it is said that the arms of the Kṣatriya aided by the science of the Brahmana attain

success. The technical term is aśān (Sans., Bk. I, ch. 3).

Ācārya). (Ar. Śās,

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of a sceptre striking terror in the subjects
of my own fertile
regions.'

The ācārya then said :

'O mighty conqueror in battle!

These remarks apply only to kings (the Cōla and the Pāṇṭya) wearing garlands of ār and margosa flowers, and beautiful jewelled crowns. O Imayavarampa ! Is there any monarch who dares to defy your wrath ?¹ They meant no insult to you; so curb your anger.²

At this the astrologer versed in the five *kēlvis*,³ who

knew the effects of the planets in each of the twelve signs

of the zodiac,³ rose up and said :
‘Powerful king ! Long

live your valour ! The time is now
auspicious for making

the rulers of this vast earth prostrate
themselves before

your beautiful lotus-feet. Prepare to start
out in that

direction which you intend to follow.’

When the monarch of unfailing success
heard this, he

ordered that his sword and umbrella
should be taken

northward. Then to the accompaniment of
cheers from

the *Porunar*,⁴ the war drum made a deafening
noise, so as

to cause *Ātiśaṣa*, bearer of the weighty earth,
to bend down

1 Cf. *Kuralveṇpā* 773.

2 *Titl*, *Vāram*, *Nakṣatram*, *Yogam* and
Karaṇam. Also

Naṭpu (ally), *Āṭci* (success), *Uccam* (leading to
glory), *Pakai*

(enemy), and *Nicam* (leading to dishonour).

3 This shows the development of astronomy
in the Tamil

land and the blind faith of the people in the effects
of the move-

ments of planets on individuals and the State.

Mauttikan (Sans.,

Maṇḥūrṭika) is the technical term for the
astrologer.

4 Bards who encouraged and cheered an

army. That such
a system was in vogue, even with regard to
Aryan warfare, is
testified to by the dramatist Bhāsa and the
statesman Kauṭalya.

Here it was the *pūrohita* who instilled enthusiasm
into the minds of the soldiers. (See Hindu

Administrative Institutions, p. 294).

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his head.¹ Jewelled lamps dispelled the
darkness of the
night; and (lifting up) their ranks of closely
flying banners,
the striking-force, the five great assemblies
and the eight
great groups, the *purōhita* in the service of
the king rich
in fierce horses and elephants, financiers,
upholders of

dharma, and executive officers, all spoke (with one voice):

‘Long live the ruler of the whole earth.’²

His sword of increasing martial repute and garlanded

white umbrella were then placed on the nape of the great

elephant³ accustomed to swallowing large balls of rice,

and taken outside to their appointed places near the

fortified walls.⁴ Then the monarch who was distinguished

by a garland of palmyra leaves intertwined with perfect

vañci flowers, entered his assembly hall, and entertained

to a grand feast⁵ the leaders of the great troops who were

clamorous and eager for vigorous warfare.

The sovereign lord of the sharp sword, decorated his

crown of gems with *vañci* blossoms from the
unflowering

Vañci when the morning drum sounded at the
gate, announ-

cing the time for other kings of the earth^e
to pay their

1 The

reference is to the legend of the serpent Ātiśeṣa bear-
ing the heavy weight of the earth.

2 The blessings of the officers of the State
on the eve of the
march of the army.

3

Paṭṭavarattanam was the name of the State elephant.

4 Preliminaries on the eve of the march

of the army. Belief

in an auspicious hour was universal and the parasthanam prayers show the prevalence of superstitious ideas. and

5 It is to be noted that the feast was given in the night. See, for an explanation of the term *perumcoru*, canto xxv, l. 144. and n. 6.

6 A reference to the time for meeting subordinate chieftains.

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tributes. With the victorious *vanci*-wreath were worn the sandals of the great God in whose form the whole universe manifests itself (Siva), and who wears the crescent in His long, dark matted hair; and having laid the head that bowed to none (else) at His holy shrine,¹ he circumambulated it. The sweet fumes from the sacrificial fires² offered by the Vedic Brahmanas deprived his garland of its lustrous colour. He then mounted the

proud war-elephant.

nape of his

There appeared before him some persons bearing the *pracātam* of the Lord (Viṣṇu) who slumbers³ in a (yogic) trance at Āṭakamaṭam⁴ and addressed him with

1 This shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was a follower of the orthodox religion which consisted in the worship of Śiva and Viṣṇu, without any sectarian bias. The temple under reference must have been the Paśupati-Kōil of the present Karūr.

2 Here is a clear reference to the religion followed by the Cēra monarch. It was the Vaidika religion, an important feature of which was the fire-rite. This shows that the Brahmanas of those days were largely engaged in performing Vedic sacrifices, and were agnihōtrins and hence Dikṣitars in the real sense of the term.

3 This refers to the *yoganidra* of Viṣṇu as the Purāṇas.

mentioned in

4 The identification of Aṭakamaṭam with the Padmanābha-svāmi temple at Trivandrum by the commentator Arumpatavural-aciriyar is unconvincing. (See also K. G. Sesha Aiyar's views in J. I. H., 1932, pp. 135-63).

Aṭakamaṭam is probably a reference to the Vaiṣṇava temple that is now found in the suburb of Karūr. For it is a far cry from Trivandrum to the capital Vañci. To have carried the prasātam all that way would have taken several days in those times of slow communication and difficult transport. It is impossible to think that the news of the march had reached distant Trivandrum and made the temple authorities go post-haste even to Cranganore for

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benedictory words: May success attend on Kuṭṭuvan,¹ the lord of the west!' Since the king had already placed on his crown of gems the beautiful sandals of the

Lord whose

matted hair bears the Gangā, he received this *pracātam* and carried it on his fair, bejewelled shoulders.

As he thus gloriously set forth, the dancing-girls who had gathered in the different theatres

appeared with
clasped arms and said: 'O conquering
monarch! May you
under the shadow of your white umbrella on
your elephant
with its forehead decked with *vākai*,
tumpai and *pōntai*,
present so delightful a sight as to cause our
to become loosened.'²
lustrous bangles

On the one side Māgada poets,³
Vaitājikas and Sūtas
praised his success in the field of battle; on
the other,
elephant warriors, cavalry captains and soldiers
with shin-
ing swords,⁴
celebrated the might of the royal sword.

the sake of argument, or to Karūr, to bless that king. It is re-
markable that there is no trace of such a Vaiṣṇava temple near
or about Cranganore.

1. Kuṭṭayan is apparently a title adopted by Iṃayavarampaṇ after he had extended his sway to the Kuṭṭanāṣu, and in the same way the Kuṭakko implies that the Cēra was also the lord of the western country. It may be noted in passing that these two nāṭus, the Kuṭa-nāṭu and the Kuṭṭa-nāṭu, are portions of the Kaṭanma-laināṣu which formed a large division of the ancient Cēra empire.

2. The implication is that they are their lovers.

soon to be separated from

3 (Sans., Māgadha.)

The presence of Māgadhas and the Sūtas was a North Indian convention. Their function was to glorify the king in season and out of season.
X, ch. 3.

Cf. Ar. Śās., Bk.

4. The foot-soldiers were often enlisted from the Maravar class who were a virile and hardy tribe.

(In this manner) the monarch left Vañci, like Indra leaving his celestial city to attack the Asuras. The leaders of the army and the advance guard of his forces, which seemed to have spread to the very shores of the foaming sea, made the backs of the mountains bend (beneath their weight) and caused the plains to quake. He marched thus with his prancing steeds and decorated chariot corps, till he reached the outskirts of the blue mountain (Nilagiri).¹ There the swaying elephants, the chariots, the horses and the veteran foot-soldiers stayed in a camp (*pāṇi*) protected by zealous guards. The king, resplendent as the sun, graced Mother Earth with his holy feet, and as he went to his great chamber he received the praises of his able warriors.

Afterwards, prompted by a desire to see this ruler of the vast earth who was like Indra² in wealth, saints moving in the sky left for the royal assembly and appeared with their bodies flashing like lightning. The monarch

rose up and rendered them obeisance,³ whereupon they

said: 'Listen, O Cera born in Vañci through

the grace

of Siva⁴ of the matted hair! We are going to the

Malaya (Potiyil) hills. It is your duty to protect the learned Brahmanas who live there, O great king!' They

then blessed him and departed. Soon after appeared the

1 The army halted at the Nilgiri hills.

2

The comparison of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan with Indra who went to

attack the Asuras, shows the influence exerted by Sanskrit legends

in the Tamil land.

3 This statement is appropriate to the Purāṇic tradition that the Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras and others used to fly in

the air. As they were supposed to be divine beings, they were

also worshipped.

4 Here is further evidence to establish the
personal religion of the Cera King.

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dancers from the Konkana country,¹
exclaiming: 'Long live the lord of the sea-girt
earth!' The fierce Karunaṭar in their respective
dresses and ornaments, and actresses whose
dark curly hair was loosely woven with
shining garlands, whose incipient breasts
were adorned with (jewelled) chains and whose
long eyes resembled dark ears, sang thus in
the *pāṇivari*:²

'The black koels send forth their note:
the bees produce the music of the *yā!*! The
summer, when buds bloom, has come! Yet our
lover has not appeared.'

Next came the people from the Kuṭaku country, with their (dancing) girls, possessors of fine bangles and carp-like long eyes. They celebrated in song the *kuravai*² peculiar to winter, thus :

‘O lady wearing bangles of fine workmanship! Put on your jewellery; watch the moment; the clouds gather rapidly with loud thunder-claps. The chariot in which my lover rode has returned. He has finished his work.’

The Ōvar⁴ also came blessing the king : ‘May our king with the mighty sword bring his expedition to a 1 The kingdoms reference.

of Konkan and Karuṇāṭaka are under

2 Pāvīvarī was the song sung during summer by the heroine who expected the arrival of her lover.

3 Karkkuravai is a kind of dancing and music appropriate to the winter season. Here it may be noted that at one and the same time while it was summer in Konkan it was winter in Kuṭaku which bears testimony to the author's accurate geographical

knowledge. It is also worth noting that this is the third kind of kuravai mentioned in this classic. The other two already noticed are Ācciyarkuravai and Kuṇṭrakkuravai.

4 Ōvīyar, a tribe. Arumpatavuralācīriyar speaks of them as ūttalar (panegyrists). This is not convincing as panegyrists have already been mentioned.

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successful end¹ and live long with his
flourishing circle
of friends and followers.'

The wielder of the lance that made his
enemies quake

rewarded those who praised (him), in the
manner ordain-

ed by the master of dances,² with rare
ornaments of which

they had no knowledge. When he rested, the
gate-keeper

came and reported : 'O king of the righteous
sceptre, and

of the lofty standard with the bow-emblem !
 One hundred
 and two actresses, and two hundred and eight
 accompany-
 ing singers, and one hundred jesters who are
 adepts in
 the ninety-six modes of *pāsaṇṇa*;³ one
 hundred lofty
 chariots,⁴ five hundred spirited elephants,
 ten thousand steeds with trimmed manes,
 twenty thousand carts laden
 with different kinds of merchandise⁵ from
 the northern
 country unknown to other places, with
 their contents
 marked by pictographs, and lastly a thousand
*kaṇcukas*⁶

1 Literally, 'finish the work assigned to his
 sword'.

2 An officer of the State (perhaps in charge of
 fine arts like
 music and dancing).

3 Ninety-six kinds of pāṣaṇḍas are distinguished. There is nothing to corroborate this in Sanskrit literature. Apparently there were a number of heretical sects.

4 The numerical strength of the army and commissariat which followed Ceṅkuṭṭuvan in his northern expedition.

5 Here is evidence of the use of the Indus script and the Egyptian script in the ancient Tamil land, implying a large volume of trade between these countries and the far south of India.

6 Kañcukamākkaḷ, literally, 'men attired in splendid dress.' From the context we gather, that they were messengers of whom different kinds are distinguished. Kañcukin was an important character in Sanskrit dramas. He was generally an attendant on the harem, or a chamberlain, and usually an aged Brahmana. See Vikramōr., Act III, sc. 1. and Śākuntala, Act V, sc. 3.

with well-coiffured heads, under the
yan,¹ have arrived at the gate.'

leadership of Cañca-

The king said: 'Let the
dancing-girls, the great officials, and musicians,
both vocal and instrumental, come
hither along with Cañcayan.' Cañcayan
splendid assembly hall of the righteous

then entered the
king, made his

obeisance, and after praising him in many
ways, he introduced to him in order the
most distinguished officials, and also the

hundred and two players, and addressed him thus: 'O king wielding the righteous sceptre! The Nūrruvar Kannar¹ who have no differences with you and are quite friendly, have said: "If the expedition to the north by the Cara king is intended to select a stone to carve the figure of a deity upon, we will take a stone from the lofty Himalayas, bathe it in the rushing currents of the Ganges, and bring it to him. We are capable of doing this." May you live long to rule over the sea-girt earth.'

The protecting king whose ocean-like army could devour the lives of enemy-kings possessing victorious lances, said in reply: 'Balakumara's sons, Kanaka and

1 The chief ambassador was Cañcayan.

2 It is difficult to interpret this term. The difficulty lies in deciding whether the expression stands for a certain individual or a group of individuals. If it is singular number, it may refer to King Śatakarṣi. Taking it in the plural, Pandit M. Raghava Ayyangar identifies them with the chiefs of Mālva. Considering the fact (which the Cilappatikāram warrants) the Nūṛruvar Kannaṛ had the command of both banks of the Ganges, meaning that their sway extended to E. Mālva, and the fact of the Mālva chief being present at the consecration ceremony of Pattinittēvi, it is reasonable to assume that an Andhra king is under reference, and that he was an ally of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan.

Vijaya,¹ and other northern monarchs, with unrestrained tongues² on the occasion of a royal banquet spoke disparagingly and in ignorance of the valour of Tamil kings. With exceeding wrath, even like the God of Death, this army marches forth.³ Therefore instruct the Nūṛruvar Kannaṛ and tell them to prepare for us a great fleet of boats in order that we may cross the sacred Ganges.⁴

After Caṅcayan had gone away, the
kaṅcukamākkaḷ, a

thousand in number, who were faultless in
 speech, brought

chips of sandalwood and pearls from the
deep sea together

with tributes dispatched by the
Pāṇṭyan:⁴ then the

guardian king directed his pictographic
scribes to send,

through them, letters (of
acknowledgement) sealed with
clay, to all those kings.⁵

After (the messengers) had left (for
their respective

destinations) the ruler of the sea-girt
earth received the

praises of the chief officials in charge
of different local

units, broke up his camp and marched to
the holy Ganges

which he crossed,

on the fleet of boats supplied by the

Kannar, to the northern bank where they
welcomed him.

Passing beyond that region also he
proceeded to the

1 For a probable identification, see K. G. Sesha Ayyar's article on 'The Date of Cilappatikāram' in the Madras Christian College Magazine, 1917.

2 Cf. Kuralveppā 127.

3 It is interesting to note that royal banquets were held, recalling modern State banquets. The Arumpatavurai interprets the term virundin manṇar as 'new kings'. In this case the meaning is that 'Kāṇaka and Vijaya and other new kings spoke thus in a meeting.'

4 This shows that the Paṇṭyan king was a subordinate chief-tain of Ceṅkuttavan.

5 This institution answers to the lekhaśa of the Arthaśāstra.

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uttara¹ country of the enemy hemmed in by a
vast expanse
of water, and with his army entered the
camp near the
battlefield.

Confronted with such a warrior,

Uttaraṇ (Sans.
Uttara), Vicittiraṇ (Vicitra), Uruttiraṇ
(Rudra), Bairvaṇ
(Bhairava), Cittiraṇ (Citra), Singaṇ (simha),
Taṇuttaraṇ
(Dhanurdhara), Śivetaṇ (Śiveta), and other
kings of the
north, along with Kanaka and Vijaya marched
at the head
of a confederate army vast as the ocean,
saying: 'Let us see
the prowess of the southern Tamil kings.'
When they
advanced thus Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ inwardly rejoiced,
even as a
hungry lion in search of prey would rejoice
at the sight
of a herd of elephants, and sprang upon
the different
forces of the enemy decorated with *kāñci*
garlands. The
pandal of flags swallowed the sun's rays;

the earth (the

battlefield) re-echoed to the sounds of the cruel drums covered with well-tanned skins, white conches, roaring drums, long horns and sweet cymbals (*pāṇṇil*),² reinforced by the all-pervading thunder of the royal war-drum with its hairy covering³ seeming to devour lives given in sacrifice.

At that time the volume of dust raised by archers with bows on their shoulders, by soldiers with fierce spears in their hands, by warriors with leather shields, by mighty chariot-warriors, by elephant-men on their white-tusked

1 What territory actually constituted this uttara country is difficult to say. Perhaps it is a reference to of the Ganges. the territory north

2 A reference to certain martial musical instruments.

3 It was the custom to have the royal drum covered with the skin of a powerful bull which had vanquished a tiger by sheer prowess. The hair was not removed from the skin. (See *Civakacintāmaṇi*, st. 2899 and *Maturakkāṇṇi*, ll. 732-3.)

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elephants, and by fleet horsemen, spread
over that vast
region blindfolding the people and choked
the clappers
of the bells hanging from the necks of the
war-elephants,
and the loud-toned conches attached to
the stately
standards—which prevented them from
striking more
terror.

The vanguard of one army came in close
contact with
the other and confusion prevailed. Heads
and shoulders

were cut off and separated when the archers gathered the dead bodies into heaps. The headless bodies (*kavan-iam*)¹ of the (soldiers) cut off by the sword, danced keeping time to the music of female ghosts, whose eyes resembled one-faced drums. Female goblins formed themselves in groups and danced drinking the blood gushing from the carcasses mixed with human flesh.

The valorous soldiers of the Arya (northern) kings celebrated for their death-dealing chariot forces, were thus slain and piled upon the battlefield; the tops of their lofty chariots, as well as their massive fighting elephants and the groups of swift-footed horses, were destroyed and piled together in heaps² by the Cera with the brilliant anklet, who pompously wore on his high crown a fitting garland of *tumpai*³ flowers intermixed with palmyra leaves, and

showed himself to the Arya kings in the
battlefield like
the God of Death riding fast on his
buffalo* to swallow
up all lives within a day.

1 See Paṭṭinappālai, 1: 236
Purāṇa, ch. 50.

and 11: 256-60 Cf. Matsya

2 The term nūlilāṭṭu means killing in large
numbers and piling up the carcasses.
See Malaipaṭu, st. 87. comm

3 Tumpai was an emblem of unique victory.

4 Mahiṣa is the steed of the God of Death.

KALLOT KATAN

The mighty spearmen Kanaka and Vijaya who bore angry spears in their hands and their fifty-two able chariot-warriors who had spoken insultingly of the Tamil kings, now tell a prey to the fury of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. Some others dressed their hair in coiled plaits, some wore ascetic robes, some smeared themselves with ashes, some looked like anchorites seated on pedestals with peacock's feathers, some as minstrels, some with musical instruments on their shoulders, and some as dancers threw away their swords and went to different regions in suitable disguises.

But those who had to guard the accoutred elephants shook with fear. These animals Ceṅkuṭṭuvan yoked like mere oxen, and using swords as sticks, he brought down the sheaf (the enemy) and by beating threshed it.¹ Him who ploughed the battle-ground with his spear, the goblins praised. They lifted with their long bangled quivering hands, the dark crowned heads of the dead and displaying them in front they sang and praised the First God in the celebrated *munṇērkkuravai* (comparing this battle) with that at the time of the churning of the milk-ocean, and with the battle waged in sea-swept Lanka, and also with the war when He, sea-hued,

drove the chariot (of Arjuna); the *pinrērkuravai*² consisted of a goblin-dance in that burial ground (the battlefield).

1 The term *atarl-tirittal* means literally 'threshing grain with cattle'. The threshing floor is compared here to the battle-ground, and the grain to the enemy ranks, and the cattle to elephants. (See *Puram.*, st. 371).

2 *Pinrērkuravai* is a kind of war dance, generally danced behind the war-chariot of honour to celebrate victory in war. Similarly there was *mugrērkuravai*, a kind of dance danced in front of the war-chariot of honour. In this particular case the dance of the goblins represented the *pinrērkuravai*.

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With crowned heads as the oven on which broken heads were placed as cooking vessels and shoulder-blades used as ladles, the

goblin-cook fed each goblin with a belly- full of animal food. Delighted with that ghastly meal, the goblin groups said this as grace : 'Let the king wielding the righteous sceptre, who fought and won this *dharmaic* battle,' live long.'

Cenkuttuvan of the mighty spear who had brought the war to a successful end said to his foot-messengers : 'Go and courteously assure our support to all those who uphold the Vēdas in the northern region, and who lead holy lives by keeping alight sacrificial fires.' Afterwards the protecting king, who had won the battle and accomplished his object with Villavaṇ Kōtai, commanded several differently armed units of his army to secure from the golden-crested Himalayas a stone slab from which he proceeded to carve the image of the peerless Goddess of Chastity.

1 This shows that the slaughter of non-combatants was not countenanced. When once the sword was cast off and soldiers had put on ascetic robes they were not interfered with. It may also be taken to mean that while it was a righteous war from the point of view of the goblins it was really an unrighteous war.

CANTO XXVII

NIRPPATAIK KATAI

OR

BATHING THE STONE

AFTER the stone slab brought from
the renowned

Himalayas in the north had been carved
into the figure
of the goddess Pattini, the rain-bestower,
it was placed

on the resplendent crowns of Kanaka and
Vijaya, who had
offered battle to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan of the angry
spear, the king
of the shining anklet, who

as if he had assumed the
function of the Lord of Death in
eighteen *nāḷikais*¹

swallowed up numbers of
lives of the Arya kings who
had not hitherto respected the prowess
of the southern

Tamils so that this sea-girt world might
add this to the

list of battles fought respectively for
eighteen years,²

eighteen months³ and eighteen days.⁴

1 Sixty *nāḷikais* make one day and night.
to 2½ *nāḷikais*.

One hour is equal

2 The reference is to a *Dēvāsura-yuddha*
but we have not

come across a *Dēvāsura* war which lasted for eighteen years,
though a number of similar wars are mentioned in the *Purāṇas*.

3 This seems to be a reference to the *Rāma-Rāvaṇa-yuddha*.

There is no authority for the statement that the Rāmāyaṇa war lasted for eighteen months. Even if we take into consideration the Khara-yuddha which is said to have been fought in Hēmana

(roughly January), Rāvaṇa was slain at the beginning of the following April. This calculation gives a duration of only fifteen months. But Kamban in describing the shedding of the blood of Sūrpanakā, the sister of Rāvaṇa, remarks that it was practically the beginning of the war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. If this tradition is to be believed the total duration of the war may be taken as eighteen months.

4. The reference is to the great battle fought at Kurukṣetra, the contending parties being the Kauravas and Pāṇavas. This duration corresponds to that cited in the epic Mahābhārata.

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Cēṅkuṭṭuvan who put to death in the field
advancing hosts of the enemy in a single day with
of battle
his army
of frightful lances, came back to the banks of
the mighty Ganges, and had the stone
intended for the goddess

Pattini bathed in conformity with Sastraic rules, with the help of masters versed in ritual.¹ There, on the southern bank of the crystal-clear Ganges, the king entered the camp in a wide plain finely fitted by the Arya kings with a spacious palace,² artistic porches, golden islets, *pantals* beautified by flowers, private chambers, large flower-groves, lotus pools, dancing-halls and much else, to meet the needs of that highly renowned monarch.

He summoned to his presence the sons of those warriors who:

had put an end to the ambitious enemy kings in those vast regions and made the daughters of Heaven³ garland them in wedlock;

had played havoc in the battlefield, and though defeated in action were not disheartened but lay with their shoulders and heads, above value, chopped off;

had triumphed over their enemies, though but hired soldiers, by the use of spears, ere their own bodies were cut asunder in that wide battlefield;

had dropped down dead with their swords, their

ancestry highly applauded and praised in a *kuravai* dance by goblins with sunken eyes;

1 This is another reference to the fact that the king was a follower of the orthodox school of Hinduism.

2 The reception accorded to Cenkuttuvan by his allies in the north in honour of his victory.

3 The reference is to *virā-svarga*, set apart for bold warriors who remain in action to the end and give up their lives heroically. It is said that such soldiers enjoy heavenly bliss.

NIRPATAI KATAI

had fallen dead with
their fellow-soldiers, causing the demise of their
wives¹ who wore sparkling jewels on
their necks;

had, as the vanguard of the army, adorned their
crowns with *vakai* wreaths in honour of having killed the
front ranks of the enemy with their spears;

had fallen down with an ornamental

staff fixed in each of their strong chariots and stood with blood on their bodies.

He also summoned soldiers who had taken possession of the field of battle after having cut off, so as to move even Yama to compassion, the dark crowned heads renowned for incalculable prowess, together with warriors whose breastplates had been pierced through to their backs causing wounds on their chests. The monarch who, by his great triumph, had won renown worthy of celebration (by poets) called to each of them 'Come near me' and rewarded one and all with a golden *vakai* flower which was more than he would present even on his birthday.* He also decorated himself with a garland of palmyra and *tumpai** flowers, befitting that great victory.

1 It was the custom for wives to take their

lives after their husbands had died heroically on the field. It does not necessarily mean that these ladies went to the field with their husbands: **Tolkappiyanār** prohibited this. (See 'Porul', sūtra 175.)

2 Rewards for the sons of heroic rulers who fell on the field. The comparison of these gifts with those on the king's birthday shows that the custom was to give gifts on a lavish scale on that particular occasion. The day is known as *perumankalam*. (See *Tolk.*, 'Porul', sūtra 90. Cf. *Veṭṭaṇināḷ*, *Perumpāṇā*, l. 295. See above *Cila.*, canto xxiii, l. 56).

3 **Tumpai** is a symbolical representation of complete victory.

representation of victory. **Vakai**

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While he was thus sitting on his throne, the **Brahmana**

Māṭalan appeared before him and said: 'Long live our king! The seashore song of the lady **Māṭavi**¹ made the crowns of **Kaṇaka** and **Vijaya** bear a weight. Ruler of the conquered sea-girt earth, may you live long!' The king replied: 'You have spoken enigmatically, and are not likely to be understood by some among these enemy

kings. What did you say, O Brahmana, learned in the four Vēdas? Please explain.'

The Brahmana Mātalaṅ then continued :
'The maid Mātavi, whilst sporting on the cool beach, had a lover's quarrel (with Kōvalaṅ). Then governed by fate,* she sang the seashore song appropriate to her dance. This resulted not in their reunion but in their separation, and necessitated his entry with his virtuous wife into the ancient towered city of Madura, whose reigning king with his wreath of leaves attained blissful heaven as a result of the murder of Kōvalaṅ, whose wife, O lord of the Kuṭavar,* entered your country. And now she is being borne upon the crowned heads of the northern kings.

*Be good enough to listen also to the reason for my coming here, O king of kings holding the illustrious spear! After going round the Potiyil hills sacred to the

1 The implication is that but for the

song, Kovalan would not have left Mātavi's house, and there would have been no tragedy and no consequent glorification of Kaṇṇaki as Dēvi, which necessitated Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's northern expedition in which Kanaka and Vijaya were vanquished.

2 The author seems to emphasize throughout the book the

working of destiny and the fruits of past karma.

3 This may indicate that the Cera was the lord of the western region as

the Coja was of the eastern (Kupakku).

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great sage¹ and bathing in the famous ghat

of Kumari

(Cape Comorin), I was returning, when, as if impelled by

fate, I went into Madura belonging to far-famed

Tennavan of the sharp sword. There when Mātari heard

that the beautiful (Kaṇṇaki) had defeated the Pāṇṭyan

king of the mighty army with her anklet, she proclaimed in the *tātērumaṇṇam*³: "O people of the cowherd

community! Kōvalaṇ has done no wrong; it is the

king who has erred; I have lost her to whom I

gave refuge. Have the king's umbrella and sceptre

fallen from the righteous path?" With these words,

she threw herself into the burning flames in the dead of night.

‘Kavunti, distinguished for her holy
penance, waxed
wroth; but when she heard of the death of
the great king
renowned for his righteous sceptre, her ire
was appeased
and she burst out: “Was this the fate of
those who joined
my company ?” She took a vow to
die of starvation* and
thus gave up her life.

‘I heard in full detail all this
and also of the devastation
that overtook the great city of Madura ruled by
the Paṇṭyan*
of the golden ear. Overcome by grief I
went back
to my native place, the ancient capital
of the Cōlas*.

and informed the chief men there of this. Kōvalan's

1 The sage under reference is Agastya.

2 Tātērumaṅgam was the common meeting-place of cow-herds and cowherdesses, and was generally under a tree.

3 The practice of sallēkana or committing suicide by slow starvation is commended to Jainas, and their ascetics in particular. Tradition says that Chandragupta to death.

Maurya starved himself

4 One title of the Pāṇṭyan king was Śelīyan.

5 Kāvērippūmpattinam,

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father heard what had happened to his son and daughter-in-law and also to the

righteous monarch of Madura, and became deeply afflicted. He distributed all his wealth in charity, entered the seven Indra-Viharas,¹ and began to practise self-denial like the three hundred monks who roam the sky, having renounced the world to obtain release from the cycle of births. The wife of him who thus renounced, unable to endure the sorrowful news of the death of her son under such tragic circumstances, died of pity. Kannaki's father also (at his fate) gave away his wealth in religious gifts, and adopted *dharma* in the presence of Ājivakas² like sages engaged in penance of a high order. The noble wife of him who made these gifts gave up her good life within a few days.

The lady Matavi heard all this and said to her good mother: "I am in duty bound to live a virtuous life. Do not allow Maṇimekalai to take to the

life of a courtesan which leads to great suffering." Shorn of her hair with the flower-wreaths therein, she entered the Buddha-Vihara and received holy instruction (*aram*). * These people died because they heard this news from me; therefore I come to bathe in the holy waters of the Ganges (in order to purify myself). Long live you, O king of kings!

1 The Buddhist temple.

2 Kannaki's father turned out to be an Ajivaka, while Kannaki's own religion seems to have been Jainism or Buddhism. This is another proof of the non-differentiation of religious sects in the early centuries of Christian era.

3 The great transformation in Matavi's life is remarkable.

As a courtesan her fidelity is all the more appreciable. She became a regular Buddhist bhiksuni by casting off her hair, the outward sign of a sannyasini. She also led her daughter to that way of thinking.

At this the mighty lord of the Ceras,
wearing the

unfadable *vañci* garland strung with
palmyra leaves and

tumpai, asked: 'May I hear what happened
in the highly flourishing Pāṇṭyaṇ kingdom
after the king's death?'

Māṭalaṇ the Brahmana spoke again: 'May
you live long,

O king of the great world. You destroyed in
a day the nine

umbrellas of nine enemy kings¹ who joined
together in an

alliance against your brother-in-law
Kiṣṣiṇavaṇ² and who

would neither countenance his elevation as
crown prince nor

listen to his commands but who caused ruin
to his thriving

kingdom; by this you re-established his
golden wheel in its rightful place.

'O Poraiyan who adorned thyself with
a garland of
palmyra leaves on the success of thy
sword, held in thy
right hand, in uprooting the margosa with
its long tufted
branches guarded by Palaiyan³ be
gracious and listen.

The victorious Vēr-Celiyan⁴ residing at
Korkai⁵ offered
a human sacrifice of one thousand goldsmiths
in a day to
the divine Pattinī who had twisted off one
of her breasts.

1 See also below, canto xxviii, ll. 116-7.
From this it is
seen that the battle was fought at Nērivayil.
See also Patirru,
Fifth Ten, patikam; also T.A.S., Vol. III, pp.
102-4.

2 The reference is to Perunarklīlī, son of
Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's
mother's brother and therefore a first cousin

of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan.

3 The lord of Mōkūr, a small but powerful
of the hills. This

line gives us a glimpse into the ancient practice
according to which
every chieftain had a guardian tree
(kāvalmaram), and the up-
rooting of that tree by an enemy king amounted
to the defeat of
the king of the
land. See Akam., st. 347, ll. 3-5; and also st. 127.

The reference is to the kaṭampu being felled by
Imayavaramban.

4 Vēr-Celiyan was the ruler of Koṭkal.

5 The Pāṇṭyan kingdom had two
capitals, Madura and

Koṭkal, corresponding to the Cōla and the Cēra.

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And when ancient Madura lost her glory and

was chafing in untold trouble owing to royal injustice, this Pāṇṭyan prince of the lunar line,¹ which was celebrated for the exemplary way in which it gave protection to the people of the southern regions, mounted in succession the royal throne of Madura, like the sun mounting in the morning, with his rays crimson, the divine chariot with the single wheel² yoked to seven horses with tiny bells attached to their necks. May the king of our land live for all time protecting the world from aeon to aeon; live he in fame.'

During the time when the king sat listening to these words of the Brahmana, the wide world was enveloped in complete darkness. With the disappearance of the sun, the thick spreading twilight reddened the western sky where the shining crescent appeared. While the great monarch was gazing at the beauty of the crescent,³ the court astrologer rose up and spoke words appropriate to

1 That the Pāṇtyas belonged to the lunar race is evident from more than one reference in the text. If there is any significance in this ancient tradition, prevalent as long ago as the early centuries of the Christian era, it shows that the Pāṇtyas were not altogether of South Indian stock, purely Tamil in character, but a branch of the lunar line established in the Tamil districts long before epic times.

2 This is in accordance with Sanskrit legends where the sun is said to ride on a chariot whose single wheel is yoked to seven horses. For details see *st. 2-5.*

see Viṣṇupurāṇa, Bk. II, ch. viii,

3 The custom of everyone, from king to peasant, worshipping the moon on the second evening after new moon day was supposed to bring health and wealth. See 'The Lunar India' in *The Indian Antiquary*, September 1933.

Cult in

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the occasion : 'In is now thirty-two months'

since we left Vaṇḍi. Long live the ruler of the earth.' Afterwards the king went along the car street of his camp, lined with strong wooden stakes and enclosed by high, curved curtains of cloth, and casting his eyes upon the hill-like tents, small and big, here and there, went beyond his private chamber down a side-lane and mounted the golden throne picturesquely decorated and beautified by the handi-work of expert artists of the palace. He sent word to Mātalaṇ through the gate-keeper and asked him: 'Now that the princes of the great and fertile Cōḷa kingdom have died, does the reigning sovereign exercise him sway without fault and with success?'

Mātalaṇ, the peaceful Brahmana, blessed him: 'O my king, may you live long!' Then he said: 'Will there ever be a time when the sharp spear of the Cōḷa, which, to the astonishment of the Devas who shine with lustrous ornaments destroyed the three fortresses (suspended from the sky),² swerves from its

upright path? This cannot
happen to the righteous sceptre of
the monarch who
carved and offered the flesh of his own
body to a pecking
kite,³ in order to relieve its hunger and
to remove the

1 This indicates that it was two years and
eight months

since Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had left his capital. A
considerable portion

of this time must have been taken in the march of
his vast army

when there were no means of quick transport.

2 See below, canto xxix, 'Ammāṇalvar!', l. 4.
For similar

references see Puṇam., st. 39; Maṇḍ., canto 1, l. 4.
Later works

like the Rājarājacōlan Ula (Kaṇṇi, 13) and the
Vikramacōlan Ula

(Kaṇṇi) refer to this incident.

3 In the Mahābhārata the story goes thus: in order to test

king Śibi's impartial justice Indra and Agni assumed the forms of

a hawk and a pigeon respectively. The pigeon which was pur-

sued by the hawk sought shelter

from the king. The hawk

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severe affliction of the dove hopping on its tiny feet. There can never be trouble even in times of adversity to the lord whose country is protected by the river Kāveri.' At these words from Maṭalan, the foremost of the learned Brahmanas, the great king and wielder of the lance, wearing the palmyra garland, became mightily pleased, and saying, 'O

Brahmana, Mātalan please accept', he honoured him with a gift of fifty *tulāms* of pure gold equal to his own weight.¹

Afterwards he gave leave to the Arya kings, the Nūr-ruvar Kannar, to go back to their own prosperous kingdoms. Next he commanded his thousand messengers—noted for their fierce replies to haughty questions asked of them by enemy kings—to exhibit to the two great Tamil kings, the royal princes of big armies who fled for their lives disguised as ascetics, and the Arya herma-
demanded of the king the pigeon, its legitimate prey. The king who had promised protection to the pigeon offered to give any substitute for it. The hawk claimed the flesh of the king himself. He gladly cut off a piece of flesh and had it weighed. To his amazement the pigeon outweighed all pieces of flesh. Then Sibi himself got into the scale, whereupon Indra and Agni resumed their genuine forms and glorified his sacrificing spirit (Vana Parva, ch. 197). For a more or less similar version see the Jāta-kas, Vol. IV, pp. 250 ff.

This forms the subject of one of the frescoes at Ajanta, though the fresco is considerably damaged. See G. Yazdani's *Ajanta*, Part I, pp. 4-7. See also N. J. Krom, *Barābudur* (1927), Vol. I, pp. 275-7.

1 A measurement equal to one's weight.

This means that Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's weight was equal to that of 50 tulāms of gold, and he must therefore have been of large stature. This is also one of the sixteen supreme gifts enjoined on all and on the king particularly. It is clear from the Vijayanagara inscriptions that its

kings performed these sixteen gifts. See *Purāṇa, A Study*, pp. 95-100.

Dikshitar, *Matsya*

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phrodite¹ distinguished for her dimpled cheeks,
dark tuft
carplike long eyes tinged red at the corners, lustrous ear-
rings, red mouth with white teeth and *sūṭakam* and other
bangles on her shoulders resembling bamboos, swelling
young breasts, slender waist which looked like lightning,
and anklets on her little feet, and also (to present) the
captive kings Kanaka and Vijaya who fought because of
their ignorance of the great Tamil valour. symbolized by
the blemishless palmyra.(garland).

In the morning, after undisturbed sleep the bee (dwell-
ing) in the blossoming lotuses of those vast regions watered
by the Ganges, was everywhere murmuring
yāṭ-like music. The young rising sun appeared
on the lofty top of the eastern hills, spreading its
wide rays. The conquer- ing ruler of the
western regions (*Ceṅkuṭṭuyan*), decorated his
wreath of *vākai* flowers with *tumpai* of the
north, went round the famous camp city, and
started in a southern direction
with his-victorious army.

In the many-storied mansion piercing the

sky (in the city of Vañci) where the Goddess of Prosperity ever dwells, was the golden harem overspread with an artistic flowery canopy, the work of skilled hands, ornamented with hanging festoons of pearls and flowers strung in rows, and glittering with the dazzle of diamonds and of lustrous gems ingeniously set at random in gold thread. Here shone the queen's beautiful gold bedstead, borne by its exquisite golden legs and covered with the soft down shed during the embraces of swans, worthy of the company of her

1 For a more or less similar description of the pēti (herma- phrodite) see Maṇi, canto iii, ll. 116-25. This custom of sending a pēti along with captured kings is peculiar and seems to imply that there was no difference between the pēti and monarch.

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lord¹ in retirement. There the queen rested, yet² could not sleep (because of her separation).

At that time the maidservants who had heard of the triumph of the chariot and sword of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan in the battlefield, and who were skilled in all modes of giving welcome news, (approached her) wishing her long life and praising her in many a song, said: '(O Lady), abandon now sorrow at the separation of your bosom-lord.' Next the small-bodied, the hunch-backed and the dwarfed waited upon her and said: 'Let Beauty reappear! The great lord is come. Dress your fragrant flowery hair with day-time ornaments.'³

Then was also heard the hill song (*kuṛiṇcippāṇi*),⁴ 'Let the path of him who returns on the fleeting elephant, decked with *vākai* and the *tumpai* of the north, be shortened' sung by the Kurava maids in different ways. Waiting in their raised lofts they beheld the forester,⁵ stupefied by drinking honey from honey-combs on bamboos, failing in his duty of hurling stones from slings at big elephants which trespassed and slept on the extensive millet fields.

The noisy song (*ōtaippāṇi*)⁶ heard: 'Having pulled down the

of the ploughmen was
great fortresses of the

1 It may mean that two mattresses were
spread one over the other on the bedstead.

2 Wives wore no jewellery during the
absence of their husbands.

Cf. also Cila., canto iv, ll. 47-57.

3 Songs characteristic of the four regions
into which the whole land was divided were sung,
beginning with the hill song.

4 From this we understand that forest-products
collected by the State watchmen. They lived in lofts and
were pro-
their chief
article of diet seems to have been honey.

5 Ōlalppāṇi is a song characteristic
of the marutam region.

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northern kings, the lord of the Kuṭavar,

who ploughed
the enemy's country with asses and sowed
white millet,¹
is come; O bullocks! you need not bear
tomorrow the
heavy plough; for it is the king's birthday²
when the
fetters of the imprisoned will be removed.'

Beside the celebrated bathing that,
attractive like
Indra's bow in the sky, and spread with the
paints, scented
powders and flowers of the bathers in the cool
Āṇ-Porunai,
the music of the flute (*kuḷalpāṇi*)³ was heard:
'The bow-
man is coming with herds of cattle from
the far famed
Himalayas. O cattle, you will mix with
them'. This
was sung by cowherds who had tied their tufts
with flower-

wreaths of charming *kuvaḷai* nurtured by
the sucking
bee, and of the sweet-smelling lotus with fully
open petals,
when they stood on the stem of the blossomed
screw-pine,
after driving the king's cattle to their watering
Place.

And there was the well-phrased love-song
(*antimpāṇi*) :⁴

‘Our king Vāṇavaṇ has returned to fondle
the shoulders
and the swelling breasts of his youthful queen.
Maidens!

Let us sing the *vaṇci* song⁵ in praise of his
tumpai adorned

with palmyra.’ This was sung in the
language of lovers

by fisher-girls who assembled on the seashore
in groups

beneath the *punnai* tree on the sands washed by
the frothy

waves playing *ammāṇai* and who gathered in their open,

bangled hands, lustrous pearls taken out of conches with clefts in their right sides.

1 Kavaṭi may also be interpreted as cowrie.

2 The

term *vellāṇi* in the text stands for the king's birthday.

It was a custom for the king to dress himself in white on that

particular day as a symbol of purity and grace.

3 The song of the *mullai* region.

4 The song of the *neytal* or the maritime region.

5 The *vañci* song was sung in honour of victory.

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Listening attentively to these songs, the mighty (sleepless) queen (Kōpperuntevi)¹ replaced

her close-fitting
bangles. The conches blew. Seated on
the topmost
point of the swift State elephant, under the
garlanded
white umbrella, Ceṅkuṭṭuvan with a *vākai*
wreath on his
crown entered Vaṅci, welcomed by its
citizens in a
procession of carts drawn by elephants.²

1 The name of the queen was
[Iaṅko-vēṇmā]. The poet
impresses upon us that she was an ideal wife and
observed vows
as a chaste wife should during the absence of her
lord. She passed
practically sleepless nights and having discarded
her ornaments
during the king's absence, put them on again when
she heard that
her lord was entering the capital.

2 Elephants were yoked to vehicles and to ride on them was perhaps the privilege of royalty. A reference to the existence of such conveyances is also

made in the Patirru., Fifth Ten, patikam.

CANTO XXVIII
NATUKAR KATAI
OR
THE CONSECRATION

EVENING, when flowers blossom and many say their prayers, took possession of the ancient city of Vanci renowned for the wealth¹ of its great king's victory over the world, and for his conquering sword and tall golden umbrella² which like the moon cools the

earth. At that

hour maidens with shining bangles offered
pretty flowers
before a lighted lamp³ burning with a white
flame, and
prayed : 'Long live the king of the whole world.'

Ladies with collyrium-painted eyes and
with firm, round, and youthful breasts warmly⁴
embraced the sword
warriors who had brought the king's
mission to a success-
ful end,⁵ and who wore wreaths of palmyra leaves and gold
chains worked with flowers. The chests of some had
been pierced by the white tusks of elephants; the chests
of others had been scarred with deep wounds caused
by long lances; the deep and shining chests of still others
had been pierced by shooting arrows; while the jewel-
decorated chests of the rest were cleft by
sharp swords.

1 For similar expressions see
Maturaikkāñci. 1. 763.

Padirru., st. 82, l. 16 and

2 The stick and the top of the umbrella were made of gold. 3 See above, canto ix, ll. 1-3, for the *mores* of household women in their evening prayers.

4 Cf. Kallūka., Kāṭal., l. 35.

5 See below ll. 133-4

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On that evening, their (ladies') oblique and passionate

glances like the flower-arrows of the god with the fish

flag, from under the curved dark eyelashes on their moon-

like faces, amidst thick clouds of sleek hair fragrant with

fumes of incense, conveyed the message (of their hearts)

to these young warriors whose chests were adorned with

jewels. They extolled the evening, saying :
‘This is indeed

a medicament;’ and the women, whose bodies were like

tender mango leaves, accorded to them a feast from the

smile of joy on their red soft lips, opening from their

coral mouths in faces with carp-like dark eyes stretching

to their beautiful ears.

Evening¹ also provided capital amusement to these

warriors in the shape of maidens with faultless faces,

shining with beauty-spots (*tilaka*) of *kastūri*.
Their curly

hair and flower-wreaths, where bees still clustered,

slipped in their enjoyment and they tidied themselves

in front of mirrors.² They then gently
withdrew a small
well-looking lute from its ornamental case
and played on
the string twisted over its venerable stem,
a *pālai-paṇ*
which was the natural result of taking the *kural*
(basic note)
itself as the tonic (*kural*). Then they played
the beautiful
kuṛiñci-paṇ in the traditional mode which was
the result of
taking *tuttam* (the second note of the scale) as
kural.

Evening then departed after pointing out to
the people
of ancient Vañci celebrated by many, the
spreading rays
of the rising moon which received the
homage of the

1 The poet narrates how Evening acted as host to the guests.

viz. the warriors who had come back from their expedition after a well-earned success. The feast consisted of the embraces of the long-separated lovers, and of singing and dancing.

2 See Pari., §21, l. 23; Akam., st. 71, The use of looking-glasses was very common.

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world, and which resembled the face of
Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, whose anklets were kissed by the
crowns of vanquished monarchs, when he gave
audience to his aggrieved subjects.

Then the lovers and their ladies obeyed the
behests of

the god of love—the archer using arrows
tipped with fine

flowers—who held his sway over the
moonlit terraces,

groves covered with fallen flowers,
dancing-halls powdered

with (soft) earth, pandals with blooming
flowers, white-

legged bedsteads and canopied verandas¹ over
all of which

spread the cool rays of the moon.

In the centre of the ancient city with its
rampart walls

where flags flew, stood prominently the
elegantly decorated

sabhā hall of the golden palace,² like Māru
standing in the

midst of this vast fruitful sea-girt earth.

To see the beauty of the moon, the
chaste and good

queen Vēṇmāḷ came, followed on one side by
lamp-bear-

ing maidens³ with glittering bangles who
uttered benedic-

tions of longevity: and on another side by those
who played

on *mirudaṅkams* smeared with mud and on
lutes with

curved pegs, and by those who
sang sweet melodies (*paṇi*);

on one side were dwarfs and hunchbacks who carried the

paste of the musk deer and the paste of white sandalwood;

and on another side eunuchs in women's clothes carried

incense and other fragrances, maidens carried mattresses

scattered with flowers, incense and other scents, and

maidservants in the approved manner carried mirrors,

1

The general meeting-places of the lovers are given. One

feature of such places was the prevalence of cool moonlight.

2 From this we gather that the palace was in the heart of

the fortress city of Vañcl.

3 The queen's attendants and followers.

The paraphernalia

consisted of musical instruments, scents, flowers and clothes,

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clothes and ornamented vessels. Along with his queen the ruler of the sea-girt earth mounted the beautifully decorated terrace.

Then, a Cakkayan,¹ a dancing expert from Paraiyūr,² which was famous for Brahmanas versed in the four Vēdas, exhibited for the king's pleasure, the dance known as *koṭṭiccētam*³ danced with Umā as part of Himself by the mighty Siva, while the anklet worn on his beautiful feet tinkled : the big *parai* borne in his loving and graceful hand sounded : his red eyes expressed a thousand charming suggestions : and his red matted hair

tossed in all directions : her *pāṭakam* did not throb : and yet her *sūṭakam* was not displaced : her waist-band did not produce any sound : her breasts did not shake; her head jewels

1 The Brahmana as actor and dancer.

2 Even today we have in Malabar a professional class of dancers and musicians who go by the the name of *śakkiyar*. Mr T. K. Gopala Panikkar in his *Malabar and Its Folk* (pp. 184-5), gives interesting details of the dress and the methods of these modern *śakkiyars* assisted by the *Nambiyars* who play the musical instruments. According to the *Divākaram* they were the *Vaḷḷuvars* or private secretaries to the kings, and the *Kūṭṭaśśakkiyars* were a section of the *śakkiyars* and were perhaps peculiar to the ancient *malaināṭu* (see *Sen Tamil*, Vol. VII, No. 1). But an epigraph of *Rājendra Coḷa*

1 (V. Rangachari's *Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency*, Vol. III, *Trichinopoly*, No. 824) records in his twenty-ninth year (A.D. 1041), 'a gift of land by the great assembly of *Kamaravalli* *Caturvēṭi-magalam* to *śakkai Māṇayam Vīkramacōlan*

for performing the dance (śākkai-kūttu) thrice on each of the festivals Mārkaṭi-tiruvāṭirai and Vaikaṣi-tiruvāṭirai.' This shows that Cākkai-kūttu was a living institution in the medieval period of the heyday of the Coḷa empire.

3 A kind of dance sacred to Śiva also known as koṭukōṭṭi or merely kōṭṭi. Here Śiva is said to have danced with Umā on one side, that is, in Ardhanārīśvara form.

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were not disturbed: and her sleek curls did not get loosened.

When he had finished praising the ruler of the vast

world, the latter went to the hall of audience¹ and bade enter

the Brahmana Māṭalaṇ, Nīlaṇ, and other kaṇcukins, when

the gate-keeper informed him of their arrival. Making

obeisance to the king through the palace-officials,² Nilan

reported: 'O king with the *tumpai* and the anklet,

tokens of success in battle! Attended by these vanquished

Arya kings we went to the ancient city of Cempiyan (Cōla)

and paid our respects to him through his officers.³ Seated

in the ornamented *maṇṭapam* constructed (with the

materials received as gifts) from the Vaccira (Vajra,)

Avanti and Magada kings,⁴ he remarked to the commander

1 The term used in the text for the hall of audience is *vetti-*

yan maṇṭapam—literally the hall where the king sat to give

audience to visitors and others. It is also known as

olakkamaṇṭ-

apam, and perolakkamaṇṭapam. See Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 18. n.

2 Here we are introduced to another detail of Tamil polity.

Officials or non-officials who wished to have interviews with the

king spoke to the gatekeeper who in his turn informed the king and with the latter's permission they were admitted to the royal presence. There were certain officials, perhaps of the nature of modern private secretaries, in the palace whose duty it was to

introduce visitors to His Majesty.

3 The term tamar has been rendered as 'officers'. It appears

that visitors to a king in Tamil India were taken to his presence by special officials who, we have to infer, were appointed for the purpose of welcoming them and introducing them to His Majesty.

The commentator explains śankocaparivāram as probably mean-

ing private officials who had nothing to do with administration.

4 This presupposes a Cola expedition to north India, some-

of his chariot corps¹
occupying the front rank of the army :

“It is no achievement to capture in
the wide expanse of

the battlefield those who, after
displaying great military
prowess, gave up their umbrellas and
swords and fled in
the disguise of non-combatants.”

‘When we took leave of the
magnanimous Cōla mon-

arch with his breast adorned with a
glowing garland, O

lord of the righteous sceptre, we went
to see the king of

Madura of resounding fame.
The Pāṇṭyan^a of the mighty

spear said: "This is a
strange kind of victory indeed,

gained by the display of exceeding
passion and anger

against monarchs who had abandoned
the battlefield to

the enemy and adopted the garb of
ascetics. It is all the

more strange when Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had
decided to use the

shaft of the far-famed white umbrella
placed by the Aryan

kings on the huge nape of their elephants
as a *talaikkōl*⁴ (a

dancer's rod) signifying Jayanta, and to
worship Śiva with

His consort Umā at his side at
Kuyilāluvam⁵ on a part of

the Himalayan slopes."

1 From the term *talaittār*, it can be inferred that the poet has in his mind the traditional reckoning of the army as *ratha*, *gaja*, *turaga*, and *pada*. Here *ratha* occupies the place of honour.

2 According to the Coṣa king, the Cēra king's action smacked of unrighteous warfare.

3 The Pāṇṭyan's view of the capture of prisoners by Cēra-
kuttuvan. To him also the action of the Cēra did not commend itself.

4 The *talaiṅkol* was invariably the shaft of the enemy's umbrella seized in war.

5

A place of worship in the Himalayas sacred to Śiva.
The learned editor invites our attention to one

Kuylālapuram, men-

tioned in a commentary on the Jain work
Nilakēṣi, as one of the
places of the Buddha's advent. It has
been suggested that the
scene of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's battle lay in the
north at Kōśala. See

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When Nilan reported the disparaging
remarks of these
two monarchs Ceṅkuṭṭuvan laughed with
scorn while his
lotus-like red eyes sparkled like fire.
(Noticing this
change), Māṭalan, of undiminished learning,
rose up and
said :
'O king of kings, may your valour live for
ever ! May
you also live long ! After destroying Viyalūr¹
famous for

neytal in small bunches, where elephant
sleep in the
mountains dense with pepper plants, you won
a decisive
victory at Nērivāyil² over nine kings wearing
atti garlands;
camping on the outskirts of Itumpil³ with
your army of
lofty chariots, you fought a fierce battle on the
sea pursu-
ing the enemy for a long distance;⁴ you
discomfited the
Arya monarchs who advanced on the banks
of the great
Ganges with its heavy torrents.

‘O king, wearing a long garland of
victory and
possessing a huge army! O lion of kings, who
knows all
that can be known from great men,
dismiss your wrath!
Ruler of the earth, may the days you have yet

to live be-

come more numerous than the particles of sand
in the cool
river Āṇ-porunai!⁵

T. G. Aravamutham, *The Kāveri, the Maukharis and
the Śāṅgam*
Age, p. 40.

1 Viyalūr is noted for pepper and elephants.
It is also
called Viyalūr and may be located somewhere in
Kaṭaṅmalaināṭu
and was once under Nannan Vēṇmāḷ (Akam., st.
97).

2 The battle of Nērivāyil: see Cila.,
canto xxvii, l. 117 ff.

It was a place to the south of Uṛaiyūr.

3 See Patirru., Fifth Ten, patikam. This is
Iṭumbāṭavanam,
a village near Tirutturaippūṇṭi, Tanjore Dt. It is

interesting that

the Tēvāram should refer to this place.

4 Here is evidence of a naval expedition.
we have no details.

Unfortunately 5 This is modern Amaravati.

See Puram., st. 11, 36 etc.

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Ruler of the earth encircled
by the deep sea, may
you live long! Pray do not dismiss my
words. Listen.

Even after passing through fifty years of your
protection¹

on this earth you do not perform religious
sacrifice² but

continue to perform the sacrifice of battle.
O king, who

carried out your vow with a sword in your
right hand
and with a garland of palmyra ! Among
your ancestors
in this city one king distinguished himself
by destroying
the *kaṭampu* of the seas;³ another exhibited
great prowess
by carving the bow-emblem on the
Himalayas;⁴ another
enabled a Vedic Brahmana in return for
composing {some
poems, to ascend (bodily) to the higher
world;⁵ another
commanded messengers of Death not to
take away lives
indiscriminately but only in a particular order;
another Cēra penetrated the golden region of
the high mountain in the
fertile kingdom of the barbarous Yavanas.⁶

1 This shows that either Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was aged fifty at the time of his return to Vañci from his northern expedition; or it was fifty years since he had assumed the reins of government. The text admits of both interpretations and possibly the latter is more likely.

2 This instance of religious sacrifice and Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's ready approval bears out unmistakably that the king was a true follower of the established religion of the land the Veda.
represented by

3 Patirru., st. 2, ll. 12, etc.

4 Further evidence of an earlier expedition to north India.

5 The reference is to Palai Kautāmaṅār. See Patirru., Third Ten, paṭṭikam. Also Cila., canto xxii, p. 63 ff., note. Palyānalccel-keḷukuṭṭuvan is under reference.

6 The Yavana country must have been somewhere in the Indus region. It is worthy of note that the learned author characterizes them as men of barbarous words. According to the Sanskritists they spoke the mleccha tongue. Their kingdom is

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Yet another Cera had the might to assail the hill fortress (*akappa*) of an enemy after driving him away with his great army from the dire battlefield; another in that illustrious line of kings bathed in the Ayirai¹ river and in the waters brought from the two seas;² another brought the *Catukkappūtam*³ unto Vañci and offered it the sacrifice of liquor; none of these escaped the clutches of death. You know well that this body is not stable. Did you not see in your battle with the

Arya kings, who insulted the audacious Tamils of conquering prowess, that wealth⁴ will not abide for all time with the men living in this fertile world?

‘O just king, it is not necessary to point out to men of wisdom that youth will not last for ever.’⁵ O protecting king, the goddess of wealth abides in your breast, for you see your own body covered with grey hairs. Even good souls in divine bodies may, it is just possible, enter human frames on earth. O

honoured king, the souls of mentioned among the northern countries in the *Brahmaṇṣa Purāṇa*, ch. 16.

1 Patirru., st. 3,
10, 79, 88-90. Pongāni is the modern name.
See Pandit R. Ragbava Aiyangar's *Vaṇcimānakar*, p. 52 ff. The river takes its source from Aylraimalai or Alvaramalai in the Anamalais, Coimbatore District.

2 The two seas under

reference are the eastern and western seas. In other words his sway extended from coast to coast.

3 Catukkam is from the Sanskrit term *Catuskam*. It was a feature of ancient cities. See, for example, the description of Lanka in the *Ramayana*, 'Sundara', ch. 53, st. 26.

4. The author's view of wealth is explained in Sanskrit by two pregnant words *cala* and *cañcala*.

5 By past karma

a god may be born as a man, a man as an animal, and an animal as a hellish being or vice versa.

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those who are born as men now may perchance be reborn as animals. Souls which cast off the bodies of animals may, it is possible, find a place in the afflicted bodies of hellish beings.¹ Men are but actors on a stage, and will have no enduring embodiment in

only one fixed form.² That life after death will depend upon deeds³ done in a previous birth is a significant statement which is not untrue. O king decorated with a garland of seven crowns⁴ on your breast, may the discus which you hold, accumulate more and more repute for your line!

‘O king of the powerful sword! I have chosen (to voice all this) not to solicit rare gifts from you. I cannot suffer to see a good soul wrapped within a good body travel the path trodden by the common people of this vast world. O king who has crossed the limits of learning!⁵ You should therefore do that great and fruitful *yajña* (sacrifice which Vedic scriptures ordain for a Kṣatriya king) with the help of sacrificial priests learned in the four Vēdas, in order that you may gain that (superior) path which gods extol.⁶

1 Here is the philosophic view of life.
The author is against postponing things to the morrow.

See Mañi., canto xii, ll. 51-2

3 Ibid., canto vi, ll. 158-9. Belief in karma and rebirth.

4 Cf. Patirru., st. 14, 16, 45 comm.

5 Evidence which shows that Ceñkuṭṭuvan was highly learned as befitted a Kṣatriya monarch.

By the fact that he consented to do the yajña, it is clear that he was a member of the Kṣatriya community. If it had not been so, the Brahmana Maṭalaṅ would not have insisted on this, which was the Kṣatriya king's birthright.

6 The implication is that the king must say.

perform the Rāja- NATUKAR KATAI

If you say that a good deed can be done

tomorrow,¹ It may chance that your good soul
trained-in Vedic lore will leave your body even
today. In the whole of this sea- girt world there
is not one who knows how long he is to live.
May you with this your wedded queen² live
ever worshipped by monarchs wearing anklets
of submission who fall at your feet! May our
eminent king live long protecting the world from
aeon to aeon !'

When the learned tongue of the Vedic
Brahmana thus
ploughed and sowed seeds³ of divine wisdom in
the king's
ears, those seeds sprouted forth in right
time. With
a desire to enjoy the fruits of the harvest of
virtue, the
king with the resounding anklets, commanded
the presence
of those sacrificial priests who had completed
their studies
by listening to teachers belonging to a group

of traditional
interpreters of the four Vēdas. They were
asked to
commence the festival of sacrificial rituals in
the manner
instructed by Mātalan.

Then he ordered the release of the Arya
kings from
prison and had them taken outside the
ancient city of
Vañci of exceeding renown, to the mansion of
Vejāvikkō,
surrounded by pools of water and
cool flower-groves.

They were told that they might return to their
own cities
on the day following the end of the
religious sacrifice.

He had then the pleasure of saying:
‘Villavaṅkōtai!

Look to their comforts as befits their
royalty.’ Orders

1 Cf. Aranerl, st. 67.

2 That the queen's presence was indispensable for the religious sacrifice is emphasized, the dharmapatni of Sanskrit literature.

3 The reference here is to the prescriptions of the Śrautasūtra.

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were issued to Aḷumbilveḷ and also to *ayakkaṇakkar*:¹ 'Let all prisons' be vacated and cleaned, let all taxes due from the citizens of our kingdom be remitted.'

Evidencing the example of the Cōḷa king wearing the *atti* garland, Pattinī worshipped and prayed to by all the earth, exhibited the truth of the good old Tamil saying that the chastity

of virtuous women would not be meritorious if the valiant monarch did not rule properly³ and made him (the Cōla) realize it; again she made the Pāṇṭyan,⁴ the guardian of the southern regions, realize that the king would not live if his sceptre swerved from justice. Further the Cera⁵ king of the western regions was made to feel that the wrath incurred by (true) monarchs would not be appeased till their sworn vows were fulfilled so as to be known to the kings of the northern regions. Pattini who in raging fury had raised flames from one of her breasts and devastated the ancient city of Madura, entered our country and stood in the fresh golden

1 Officials of the State, probably connected with the Department of Accounts, especially the Revenue Department.

2 See above, canto xxiii, ll. 126-7. Cf. Maṇḍ., canto xix, l.

161. Jivaka., canto 1. 2372.

3 Cf. Mañi., canto xxii, ll. 208-9.

Kuraṭvenpa 543, comm,

by Parimēlaḷakar. The implication is that because the Coḷa king

did not reign properly, Kōvalaṇ left his wedded wife for a cour-

tesan, and after wasting all his wealth, he had to abandon his

native place for an alien country to seek a livelihood.

4 The implication here is that the Pāṇṭyaṇ king did not

make the necessary preliminary inquiry before administering

justice as evidenced by his execution of Kōvalaṇ thmomy of his goldsmith.

on the mere tes-

5 The implication in the case of the Cēra is that no Kṣatriya

is an insult from another Kṣatriya lying down. He

rarely face the situation.

shade of the cool *vēṅkai* branches. To that venerable lady was dedicated, by the united aid of the *dharmaic* Brahmanas, *purōhitas*, astrologers, and expert sculptors,¹ a shrine (*Pattinikkōṭṭam*), constructed in all its parts according to the prescribed rules² so that it might win the approval of the wise. Therein was planted the image of Pattinī, carved³ with expert handiwork upon the stone brought from the Himalayan slopes, the residences of gods, after prayers to the god (Śiva) on the top of those hills. (The deity) was decorated with choice ornaments of exquisite workmanship, and worshipped with flower offerings. At the temple entrance were stationed (images of) the guardian deities.⁴ The lion of kings who brought all north India under his control thus performed the ceremony of consecration (*kaṭavun-manṅkalam*) and commanded the

conduct of worship from day to day by
sacrificial offerings and other festivities.

1 The

silpins or the sculptors were there to build the temple
according to the Silpaśāstra.

2 These

rules are largely found in the treatises known as the
Āgamas. It may be that the Āgama school had
come to stay

even before the commencement of the Christian
era. See P. T.

Srinivasa Iyengar, History of the Tamils, pp. 87-8.

3

This is evidence that Sanskrit works
on the Silpaśāstra

had come into popular usage in the Tamil land.

4

These are called dik-pālas and
dvāra-pālas in Sanskrit
literature.

CANTO XXIX

VALTTUK KATAI

OR
THE BLESSING.

'PREFATORY'

HAVING defeated the Koṅkus in a fierce
battle and journey-

ed to the banks of the great Ganges,
Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṇ —son

of Cēralātaṇ who alone ruled all the
earth from Cape

Comorin to the Himalayas,* and of the
daughter of the

Cōḷa of the illustrious solar
race—remained at Vaṅci in

a wrathful mood.

At that time several saints of the north

came there, and reported to him that the northern kings who had gathered together on the occasion of the marriage^a of a certain princess unanimously derided the prowess of the kings of the southern Tamil regions, who had once opened war on them and carved on the Himalayan slopes their distinctive emblems of bow, fish and tiger. In disparagement they said: 'Perhaps crowned kings here as powerful

there were then no
as 'ourselves.' Like a
wheel that has been set revolving by a
stick, the decision

to take a stone from the Himalayan slopes
for the image

(of Kaṇṇaki), received confirmation as it
enabled Ceṅkuṭ-

1 Here is a summary in prose of the gist of the whole story. With the closing of the last canto ending with maṅkalam, the drama comes to an end. Cantos xxix and xxx read like the Uttara-kaṇṭam of Vālmiki's Rāmāyaṇa.

3 Svayamvaram or selection of a husband
by the bride was a common
form of marriage among the ancient

Kṣatriyas.

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tuvaṇ to vanquish the kings of Aryavarta. When he had accomplished this he stayed for some time on the banks of the Ganges as an honoured guest, but he made some of them bear the Himalayan Śilā-deity¹ on their crowned heads after bathing it, according to tradition, in the holy Ganges. Thus he appeased his exceeding indignation. He entered the city of Vāṇci and enshrined with ceremonious consecration the idol of Kāṇṇaki, whose breast was responsible for a revolution, in a temple which was worshipped by many

crowned kings of the earth offering tributes.

Soon after this, Mācāttuvān² became an ascetic, having heard from the gracious Brahmana an account of the inconsolable mourning of Kaṇṇaki, who had shed tears from the carp-like eyes in her moon-like face, and whose dark dusty tresses had fallen over her back as she condemned the God of Righteousness for the injustice done to Kōvalan resulting in his death at the hands of a detestable person; whereupon she had stood with flowing tears before the king, who died of his unjust act. His aged wife too gave up her life.

On hearing this (account) the nurse, the chief maid, and Dēvanti³ who had sought refuge with the deity Cāttan, became sorely vexed and went together to see Kaṇṇaki in the great city of Madura, and there heard of the havoc caused by her cast-off breast. They then repaired to the cowherdess Aiyai, the daughter of Mātari, who ceased to

live after the loss of her refugee; and all of them took the

1 The term in the text is *apaṅku*.

2 Cf. Maṇi, canto xxviii, l. 73.

3 News spread to Pakāra of the disaster which had overtaken Kāṇṇaki and her husband. Dēvanti, Kāṇṇaki's nurse, and the maid then left for Madura to see their distressed friend.

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route along the Vaikai, and ascending the lofty hill,¹ entered the palace of king Ceṅkuṭṭuvan who had enshrined the Lady of Chastity, and addressed him on their relationship (to Kāṇṇaki) thus :²

SPEECH OF DĒVANTI

‘Know me ! I am the companion of that deity protected by the three crowned kings, who was born in the northern Himalayas³ and bathed in the swift flowing

side of the

Ganges, and whose shoulders are adorned
with bangles.

Know me as the companion of the lady of
the Cāṇ country.'

SPEECH OF THE NURSE

'Know me as the nurse of the lady with
long eyes, who did not show her anger
towards the modest and fair Mātavi¹ but
who went clasping her beloved husband's
hand to the dreadful forest where even a
potful of water could not be found in the wells.
Please know that I am
the foster-mother of the lady of cool Pukar.'

1 The hills under
near modern Dīptigul.

reference may perhaps be the Pāṇi hills
Pāṇi is still an important place of pilgrim-
mage to Malayali Hindus.

2 The three who left Pukar for Madura saw Ceṅkuṭṭuvan and each spoke to him about the greatness of their friend.

3 The stone for the image was taken from the Hlmalayas. According to Vāstu literature images were also made of earth and wood. But by the time of the Cilappatikāram, śila or stone must have taken their place.

4 As Kāṇṇaki's difficulties were indirectly due to Mātavi, it would have been natural for her to be angry. But Kāṇṇaki's righteous temperament did not allow her to do more than consider how resistless are the decrees of fate.

VAṬṬUK KATAI

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SPEECH OF THE CHIEF MAID

‘Know me as the companion of the lady with the golden bangles who had nothing to say to the mother who gave

her birth, nor even a word for the nurse who
brought her
up, nor for me either, but followed her
husband remembering
only her duty as a true wife.² Know me, a
companion
of the lady of Pūmpukār.'

LAMENTATION OF DĒVANTI³

'I have done no penance. I did not
realize the implication
of your bad dream on the day I heard it.
O, what
have I done? On the day when your
mother heard of
the havoc caused by your cast-off breast, O
lady with the
beautiful tresses of hair, she died of grief.
O, did you
hear, friend, your mother-in-law also died?
O, did you
hear that, friend?'

LAMENTATION OF THE NURSE

‘Macāttuvāṇ heard of the harm done to
Kōvalaṇ by
that wretched man, and the consequent
death of the
protecting king. Losing heart, he preferred
death to life
and after making several gifts he took to
asceticism.*

Did you hear that, mother? O, did you also
hear, mother,
of the renunciation of Māṇaikaṇ?’

THE CHIEF MAID'S LAMENTATION

‘Matavi heard of the death of your
beloved and of
the extreme suffering to you, the lover, and
of the crying

Aṭittōl is, according to the grammatical treatise
Tolkap-

plyam, the daughter of a nurse who serves as the
companion and
maid of the daughter of the house.

2 See above, canto xv, ll. 143-4.

3

All the three now address the image of Kaṇṇaki,

4 Mācattuvāṇ and Mānāikaṇ took to an
ascetic life. Life
as householders had no more charm for them.

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for shame by common folk, and lost heart.
She went to the holy saints living under the *bōdi*

tree,¹ gave away in charity all her wealth, and became a nun. O companion, did you hear that? O companion, did you also hear of the renunciation of Maṇimēkalai?

LAMENTATION OF DĒVANTI POINTING TO AIYAI²

‘This unmarried girl is the daughter of the old lady³ who

gave up her life saying: “I enter the fire. I was not able

to protect the refugee entrusted to me by her (Kavunti)

of doubt-free vision.” Do you see, friend, Aiyai of the

lovely teeth? Do you see, friend, this fair daughter of

your aunt?’⁴

CENKUTTUVAN SPEAKS

‘What, what is this? O, what is this? What is this?

O! I see in the sky the marvellous sight of a lightning-

like figure with golden anklets,⁵
waist-band, bangles on
her arms, golden ear-rings set with
excellent diamonds
and other ornaments of superior gold.'

Kaṇṇaki showed her divine
exclaimed:

form to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan and

1

The term bodhi tree is significant as it proves
that both

Mātavi and her daughter Maṇimēkalai became
Buddhist bikṣuṇīs
or nuns.

2 Dēvantī now addresses Alyai who
followed her and
companions from Madura to the sacred hill.

3 The term Avvai or Auval here is one of
respect.

4 Māma and Māmi (uncle and aunt) are

terms still gener-

ally used by Tamilians today when addressing elderly men and

women. This form of address has thus been the custom from

ancient times.

5

Kaṇṇaki was seen by Ceṅkuṭṭuvan in the air in the form

of a goddess.

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‘The Pāṇṭyan is blameless.

He is now a good guest in the palace of the king of gods. I am his daughter.¹ I am going to sport on the hill of Veṇṇelāṇ (Skanda); friends, please come with me there, all of you.’

SPEECH OF THE MAIDENS OF VANCI

‘Maidens of Vaṇci, O maids with waists like vaṇci-creepers, O maids whose feet are dyed

with lac, who form the retinue of the conquering monarch, all of you, come !

‘Come, all of you, and sing about her who devastated
the city of Kūṭal with her breast and discomfited
the king with her anklet. Let us all sing about the
daughter of Tennavan. She came to our country
whose king spoke these words of praise:
“Pāṇṭyan
monarchs would not live if their just sceptre
deviated from
its path.”

‘About that beautiful damsel all of us shall sing. Come
along, all of you, we shall sing about the Pāṇṭyan’s
daughter.’

THE SPEECH OF THE GROUPS OF

'We said that she was our king's daughter. She said that she was the creeper-like daughter of the king of the

1 Here Kannaḱi calls herself the daughter of the Pāṇṭyan

king. As the latter was the cause of her transformation into a goddess she claims the Pāṇṭyan as her father. The Veṇṇēlan hill cannot be Ceṇkoṭu as the commentator has it. Nor can it be Ceṇkuṇṇam, if Vaṇci is to be identified with karūr in Coimbatore district. This hill is also known to the Caṅkam classic, Kalittokai

(st. 27). But it is difficult to venture a conjecture as to its identification. Probably the reference is to the chain of Pāṇi hills (see R. Raghava Aiyangar's Vaṇcimānakar, p. 128).

2 Group worship by the people of Vaṇci.

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Vaikai.¹ We shall praise the Vāṇavan
(Cera). Let the

gods praise the king of the Vaikai.'

PRAISE (AND BLESSING)

'Long live the king who surrendered his life² to the

tears of the sorrow-stricken maiden
prompted by pre-
ordained fate !

'Long live the old dynasty³ of kings
reigning over the

people of Madura encircled by the
constantly flooding

Vaikai ! Live long !

'Long live the king⁴ who made the
tall-crowned

monarchs of northern regions bear on their
heads the

(stone) image yielded by the king of
mountains (the

Himalayas) !

‘Long live the king and his ancient’
dynasty at Vaṅci
encircled by the Āṇ-porunai in continual
floods! Live
long!

‘All of us shall sing to the king of the Kāvēri
regions.’

Let us sing of Pukār, O girls
with flower-decked
tresses!

1 This is in accordance with Kaṇṇakī’s own claim to be the
daughter of the Pāṇṭyan.

2 As has already been shown this points to the high sense
of justice that actuated the Pāṇṭyan monarch. The king here
stands euphemistically for the king’s line.

3 This shows that the Pāṇṭyan dynasty had
a much more
ancient history than we would ordinarily imagine.

4 This is in praise of Ceṇkuṭṭuvan who
made Vijaya and
Kaṇaka carry the stone intended for the image.

5 The reference is to king Neṭuñceliyan.

6 It is worthy of note that each of these three
Tamil kings
lived on the banks of a river. The An-porunai for
the Cēra, the Kāverī for the Cōla, and the Vaikāi
for the Paṇṭya show the truth

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AMMĀNAI SONG¹

‘O Ammānai! who is that strong man who reigned
over the sea-girt world and guarded the tall fortress of the
king of gods? That powerful person who
guarded the tall
fortress, O Ammānai, know to be the
Cōla king who
pulled down the three fortresses
suspended from the
heavens. O Ammānai, sing of Pukār, the
capital of the
Cōla!
‘O Ammānai, who is the conquering
king’ praised in
heaven for weighing himself and offering

flesh from his
own body, for the sake of a dove? That king
who cut off
his flesh, O Ammānai, was the king³ to whom
(on a pre-
vious (occasion) a cow appealed for justice.
O Ammānai,
we shall sing of Pūmpukār, that king's capital !
‘O Ammānai, who was he that planted
the emblem of
the strong tiger on the northern Himalayas
when the ele-
phants at the eight cardinal points⁴ looked on
with unwink-
ing eyes? O Ammānai, he who carved his
tiger-emblem on
the northern Himalayas was the conquering
monarch who
of the theory that
ancient kingdoms and civilizations rose and
flourished on important river beds. It bears

Tamil culture also.
out the antiquity of

1 This section of the Ammānai
song, consisting of three
stanzas of five lines and one stanza of six lines, is
sung in praise
of the Coḷa monarch who had his capital in Pukār.
Ammānai is
a wooden ball. The game of ammanai is still
current among the
womenfolk of the Tamil land.

2 The reference is to Śibi Cakravartī.

3 The allusion is to Manuntikaṇṭha Coḷan.

4 Aṣṭadīggajas in Sanskrit Literature.

Legend has it that

the universe lies balanced on the tusks of elephants,
each elephant

supporting a quarter of the world.

Here it alludes to the exten-
sive conquests of the king.

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with grace brought all the eight directions
under one umbrella. Let us sing, O Ammānai,
of Pūmpukar of that king.

‘O Ammānai, what is the object of the
maidens with

handsome ornaments, singing in their homes
holding wood-

on balls in their hands ?

The object of singing (thus) in

their houses is, O Ammānai, that their
garlanded king

should embrace their full-grown and
alluring breasts. If

our king so embraces such full-grown and
alluring breasts,

we will sing of the romantic city of Pukār, O
Ammānai!’

THE (KANTUKA) BALL SONG¹

‘O girl shining like a golden creeper!

With golden

necklaces glittering and in harmony with
the repeated
tinkling of our lightning-like girdles,
let us run in all direc-
tions and strike the rebounding ball saying :

“Long live the
Pāṇṭyan, long live he.” Let us strike the
ball saying :

“Long live he who wears Indra’s garland on
his chest.”

‘Let us go, come, sit and move about in
front, behind
and everywhere, as if the lustrous
creeper-like lightning
of the sky had descended to the earth. Let
us run and

strike the rebounding ball saying : “Long live
the Pāṇṭyan,
long live he.” Let us strike the ball saying :
“Long live
he who wears Indra’s garland on his chest.”

‘The rebounding ball did not stay in

our palms : nor
 did it rise
 up heavenward leaving the vast earth. Let
 us go and strike the ball, saying : "Long live
 the Pāṇṭyan,
 long live he." Let us strike the ball saying :
 "Long live
 he who wears Indra's garland on his chest."

I

This section of Kantukavari (or play with balls),
 consists
 of three stanzas of four lines.
 Each is sung in praise of the
 Pāṇṭyan king reigning at Maḍura.

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THE (UCAL) SWINGING SONG¹

'Seated
 let one of us

on the ornamental swing suspended by ropes,
standing close to Aiyai stretch out her hands
and beating the single time-beat, sing of our king
who first destroyed the *kaṭampu*. Shall we not
swing ourselves in the swing rolling our
palm-like oval eyes? Shall we not
swing ourselves in the swing singing about the
the cruel bow?
carving of

‘Singing about the heroism and valour of
the mountain
king Poraiyan, our Cera, who ungrudgingly
gave immense
quantities of food² in the war fought
between the five
(Pāṇṭavas) and the hundred (Kauravas),
shall we not
swing in the swing causing our cloud-like
tresses to wave?
Shall we not thus swing singing about the
way in which

the *kaṣampu* was destroyed?

'Shall we sing to the glory of our king,
the lord of
men, who protects the earth as far as
Cape Comorin,
abounding in heavy large stones, with his
bow, fish and
tiger flags, including the fertile country of
the Yavanas
of barbarous speech?' Shall we
not swing in the swing
bending our lightning-like waists? Shall
we not sing
of the prowess of him who carved the
bow-emblem?'

1 This section of Ucalvari, consisting
of three stanzas of
five lines each, is in praise of the Cēra king reigning
at Vañci.

2

See above, canto xxiii, l. 55; cf. *Purāṇ.*, st. 2.

3 Another reference to the extensive conquests of the Cēra King. He was not only the overlord of the Tamil kingdom but carried conquests to the very north, including the Yavana country. For the Yavans, see Patirru., second patikam. It is interesting to note that the Yavanas spoke a harsh tongue.

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ĠILAPPATIKARAM

VAĠĠAIPPATTU OR THE PESTLE

SONG¹

The maidens of Pukār² gathered
together under the
shade of the flowering *kāñci* tree to
pound valuable pearls
(as rice) using sweet sugarcane as their
pestles, singing in
praise of Cempiyan's strong chariot and his
discus ensign
and his garlanded shoulders wide and broad.
That alone
is song. That song alone is the song
which is sung by
these damsels (of Pukār).

The damsels of lofty-towered Madura³

pound with

coral pestles, pearls celebrated by poets,
singing in praise

of the fish-emblem of the Pañcavaṇ⁴ whose
shoulders shine

with the garland of the king of the gods.
That alone is

song. That song alone is the song which
eulogizes the

margosa garland of the Pāṇṭyaṇ.

The damsels of Vañci⁵ who pound
priceless pearls with pestles of white ivory in
sandalwood mortars, sing of

the worldwide fame of the garlanded Cēra
for the de-

struction of the *kaṭampu* after crossing the
waves. That

alone is song. That song alone is the song
in praise of

the palmyra garland, which enraptures the heart.

Now, it is difficult for those who do not
worship the

auspicious feet of Poraiyaṇ⁶ of the great bow,
to bless our

lord of the great earth. Our king's
illustrious daughter

(Kaṇṇaki) spoke benedictory words: 'May
our Ceṇkuṭ-
tavan live long.'⁷

1 This section is praise to all
the three principal Tamil

Kingdoms, the Cōḷa, the Pāṇṭya, and the Cēra.

2 Pukar was noted for sugarcane and corals of
great value.

3 Madura was noted for superior pearls and
coral.

4 Paṇcavan is another term for the Pāṇṭyaṇ.

5 Vañci was noted for
elephants, sandalwood and also
pearls. Thus all the ancient Tamil kingdoms were
rich in pearls.

6 Poraiyaṇ is another term for the Cēra.

7 The section appropriately ends with
Kannaki giving her
blessing to Ceṅkuttuvan.

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VARANTARU KATAI

OR

THE BOON

THE great king who had subdued the
north saw with
his own eyes the divine form of Kannaki.
He looked
well at Dēvantikai and asked her: 'Who is
that Maṇimā-
kalai for whom you cried out your heart?
What were the
grounds for her renunciation? Please tell me

that.'

Devantikāi blessed the king: 'May the king's

fame grow without diminution! May the country shower

plenty!' She then narrated to him the great renunciation¹

of Maṇimākalai, celebrated among the group of dancers with

handsome waist ornaments. She began by saying that her

dark tresses had grown in luxuriance so as to be divided into (the usual) five plaits, and her cool eyes delightfully red in the corners had acquired a new charm of which she was unconscious. (Continuing

her descrip-

tion of Maṇimākalai she said :) Within her tender coral

lips, her pearl-like teeth were not fully grown; her lovely

breasts had developed; her bosom had broadened; her

slender waist became narrower and her pretty *alkul*

had widened; her two thighs were rounded; her

shapely tender feet, unable even to bear (the weight) of

1 Maṇimēkalai, the lovely daughter of the courtesan Mātavi

and Kōvalan, renounced her worldly life at an impressionable

age, and overcame all temptations. She performed such miraculous works as inspired the poet Cattanar to compose an epic recording her life and career.

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ornaments, became glossy to the view. Yet men of noble families did not recognize her as a professional dancer because the dancing master had not initiated her into that art.

‘At that time Mātavi’s good

mother¹ asked her daughter: "What is your intention? What am I to do?" Then Mātavi called Maṇimēkalai to her, saying: "Come here, my dear modest daughter," and removed her locks² with the flower-wreaths thereon, thus making the bodiless god fling to the bare ground his flower dart and his bow of sugarcane. She was admitted to the Buddhist Sangha to follow their *dharma*.

When the king and his citizens heard this they felt as sorry as one who had dropped a priceless gem into the deep sea. The well-spoken saint³ said very kindly: "The lovely girl expressed to me her wish for renunciation." Because that fair maiden changed her fair appearance despite her youthful age, I lamented.'

After speaking thus to the king, Davantikai became god-possessed,⁴ and the flower wreaths on her locks fell loose behind her; her brows began to quiver; her coral lips shut to; her white teeth were her words were not normal; her

set in a strange smile;
lovely face perspired;

1 The name of Mātavi's mother was Citrāpatī.
See repro-ached Mātavi for having failed in her duty
of initiating Maṇimā-kalā into the art of dancing.

2 The Buddhist bhikṣuṇī was expected
to cast off all her adornments and shave her
head. See above, canto xxvii, ll. 107-8.

3 The saint under reference is Arayana
Aṭikā. See S. K. Aiyangar's Maṇimākalā in its
Historical Setting, pp. 221-30.

4 It was the god Gāttan who entered into
the person of
Devantika and served as the medium between
the god and man.

her fair eyes reddened and her hands were lifted up in a threatening manner. Then she moved her legs and rose from her seat. Unrecognized by many was her understanding. She was in a state of bewilderment. With parched tongue she spoke inspired words before the king of the blossoming *kuṛiñci* region.

‘Among the modest, good, and beautiful womenfolk who have come here to see the installation of this goddess, there are the twin girls born to the handsome wife of Araṭṭan Ceṭṭi, as also the little daughter of Caṭakuṭumpli,¹ engaged in the service of the Lord reposing upon the Divine Serpent in the Golden Temple (Āṭaka-māṭam). Near the temple of Maṅkalā-Dēvi² there is a sky-high hill on the red crests of which stands a big bow-like rock with many pools. From their midst issues forth water, with white stones like small mustard seeds, and red stones resembling

murukku flowers which seem like dissolved rice flour.

‘As those who bathe in those pools will gather know- ledge of their past births, I² brought that water and handed it over to you,
O Brahmana Mātalaṇ, when you were sitting at the portal of that temple and said :
“Receive this.

It is meant that you should preserve it.
Are you not keeping it in that

pot within your string-bag (*uri*) in your

1 A member of the *Arcaka* community.

2 Dr Swaminatha Aiyar in a note

says that the allusion is to Kannaki. Pandit Raghava Aiyangar examines this and locates the place as the Durgā temple in the village Mangalam, some nine miles to the north-west of Viṛuddāchalam (Cēraṇ Ceṇkuttu- vaṇ, p. 8, n. 2). It is interesting to note the name Maṅkalādevī- amman occurring in an epigraph (Ep. Rep. 420 of 1907) to whom the king of Kērala assigns certain lands as gifts.

hand?" As that water will not lose its divine quality so long as the sun and the moon exist, if you now sprinkle it upon these three little girls you will find them remembering their past births. Know me to be Paśaṇṭan¹, appearing within the person of this Brahmana lady."

At this Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was lost in wonder, and turned towards Matalan when he said with good cheer: 'Hear this, O king! Let all your ills disappear. Lady Malati once offered milk to the child of her co-wife when fate pursued her and death cut short its life. Mourning inconsolably, and utterly downcast for the child, she prostrated herself, asking for grace, before Paśaṇṭan (Cātan) who came to her in the form of her child² and said: "Mother, give up your great grief" and removed her affliction. He who performed this miracle (Cātan), grew up well tended under the fostering care of his mother (Malati) and her co-wife in the ancient family of the Kāppiyas.³ He then married Davantikai by going round the fire. And after living with her for eight years, he showed her his

1 See above, canto ix, l. 15, where the term *pāṣaṇṭaccāṭṭaṇ* occurs. In the light of this passage it is reasonable to assume that the word *Pāṣaṇṭaṇ* stands for the god *Cāṭṭaṇ*.

2 The account smacks of mythology. It is said that God Himself came to *Mālati* in the form of her deceased child, grew up in her house, was married, and after a brief period as a householder, returned to His shrine.

3 Dr Swaminatha Aiyar identifies *Kap̄piyakkuḍi* with a village south-east of *Shiyāli*. Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar is of opinion that the reference is to the family of *Kāp̄piyas*, perhaps *Kāvvaḡōtra*. If the latter construction be accepted, we are reminded of the grammatical treatise *Tolkāppiyam* whose author

was evidently a *Kāp̄piyanār*, a member of that name.

the family or *gotra* of

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youthful divine form and disappearing said:
"Come to
my temple."

'When I was in the temple of
Maṅkalā-Devi, this
god appeared before me in the form of a
Brahmana and
gave me this string-bag with the pot in it and
asking me
to keep it safe, went away. But he never
appeared before
me again. I took it away with me.
Just now, the All-
Wise appeared in the person of the
Brahmana lady and
said to me: "Sprinkle that water."
O king, let us, there-
fore, sprinkle it over these damsels and know
the truth.'

When he had thus sprinkled it, the
knowledge of their
previous births rose up in their minds and
(the mother of
Kaṇṇaki) began to sob thus: 'O my

daughter, O my

helpmate! Without even caring for me who
sympathized with

you because your celebrated husband
misbehaved towards

you, you went to an alien city alone but for
the company

of your husband, and suffered exceeding
trouble. O my

dearest!

Will you not come and relieve me of my great
sorrow?

Another (the mother of Kōvalan) said.^a
'O, you be-

took yourself away in the dead of night alone and in
misery, with my good daughter-in-law staying with me.
Grieving over your departure, I began to rave. I can
no more endure this. Will you not come to me, my son?

The third (Mātari) said:^a 'I left for the bathing ghat
of the Vaikai of fresh floods. When I came back I heard

1 See, for details, canto ix, ll. 5-36.

2 The mother of Kappaki, now born
as one of the twin

daughters of Arattan Cetti.

3 The mother of Kovalagi, born now as
one of the twin

daughters of Arattan Cetti.

4 Mātari, the cowherdess, now born as the daughter of a
Brahmana arcaka.

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(the news) from the youngsters of the
I did not see you in my house. O
famous ancient city.
my dear, my dear,
where have you hidden yourself?

In this manner the three young bangled girls with lisping mouths, lamented again and again and sobbed and wept, uttering their elders' words before the warlike king with golden jewels on his chest. When the king of the *pōntai* garland and victorious anklet looked at the face of M'āṭalan, the Brahmana wearing the sacred thread on his chest, he blessed him: 'O king of kings, long may you live!' and spoke what he remembered: 'These three were, in previous births, much attached to the devoted wife of Kōvalan who seized the must elephant's tusk to release (from its clutches) a Brahmana suffering deep sorrow, and thus attained the form of a celestial; but they could not follow her to the other world as they had performed no other act of virtue. Because of their excessive attachment born of heartfelt love towards the lovely lady (Kaṇṇaki) like

the golden creeper, who fearlessly approached this ancient great city of Vañci, these two were born¹ as twins, to the great satisfaction of the good and modest wife of Araṭṭan Ceṭṭi; and this elderly cowherdess (Mātari) who in her previous birth was devoted to the charming lady (Kaṇṇaki) and performed a *kuravai* dance has now been born as the little daughter of Ceṭṭakkuṭumpi in the service of Lord Viṣṇu.²

It is not strange that people who do good things attain heaven and people who have worldly minds are re-born, and that good and bad deeds have their

1. Here

the poet brings out the great Hindu ideal that detachment and not attachment leads to salvation with no more rebirths.

2. The kuraval dance is sacred to Viṣṇu and hence Mātari was born in a family devoted to the service of Viṣṇu.

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own reward and that those born should die, and those dead should be re-born. Those are ancient truths.¹

'You who were born through the grace of Him who rides on the sacred Bull² and have won distinction as a king in this wide world, saw, clear as an object held in the palm of your hand, the fruits of righteous deeds and the forms of holy people. Live long from aeon to aeon protecting the earth! Live long, gracious monarch.'

Pleased with what the Brahmana Mātalan said, the king endowed³ grants to the temple of the ever-youthful Pattiṇi who had twisted off her breast and thereby raised flames which enveloped the noisy *kūṭal* of the great Pāṇṭyan kingdom, much celebrated in poetical themes. He further ordered the conduct of daily festivals by instructing Devantikai to offer flowers, perfume and incense.

The monarch of the world circumambulated the shrine thrice and stood proffering his respects. In front of him the Arya kings⁴ released from prison,

kings removed⁵ from the central jail, the Koṅku ruler of the Kuṭaku, the

1 The great truth that was taught by Kṛiṣṇa on the battle-field of Kurukṣētra to Arjuna. The Gītā says :

Jātasya hi dhruvō mṛtyuh dhruvam janma mṛtasya ca.

2 Another statement to testify that Cenkuṭṭuvan's religion was Saivism.

3 The evidence of epigraphy shows that this custom of endowing temples was practised by all Hindu kings in all periods of Indian history.

4 The Arya kings are Kanaka and Vijaya.

5 Cf. A.S.I., 1905-6, p. 170.

king of Malva and Kayavāku (Gajabāhu),¹ the king of sea-girt Ceylon, prayed reverentially to the deity thus: 'Please grace our countries by your presence just as you have done this auspicious day, a fête-day at Imayavarm-pan's sacrifice.' Then a voice from the welkin issued forth: 'I have granted the boon.'

At this Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, the other kings and their valorous armies praised the deity in pregnant words as if they had gained salvation (*viṭu*).² Then with the seeker of truth, Brahmana Mātalan, and with kings of low-sounding anklets who bowed at his feet, Ceṅkuṭṭuvan entered the sacrificial hall.³ I⁴ also went in. Afterwards Devantikā stood up before me god-possessed. She came to me, and said: 'In the artistic Audience Hall of the ancient city of Vañci, when you were seated by your father's side, you frowned upon the astrologer who predicted

indications of your succeeding to the throne, so as to relieve the affliction of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan famous for his chariot^s forces and his fragrant *koṅku* garland. You then went away to the Kuṇavayirkōṭṭam^s and standing before

1 Here is evidence that Gajabāhu introduced the Pattipī cult into Ceylon and this cannot be untrue as we are still able to trace remains of this cult today. See Appendix iv.

2 Viṭu stands for mokṣa in Sanskrit.

3 This is definite evidence that Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was a follower of the Vedic religion. The following line throws welcome light on the personal religion of Iṇaṅko-Aṭikaḷ also. If he had been converted to the Jain faith he would not have attended the sacrifices performed according to Vedic rules, with the help of the Vedic Brahmanas.

4

I stands for the author, Iṇaṅko-Aṭikaḷ.

5 We have to understand that Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had not only a

powerful elephant corps but also a strong chariot force.

6 The story of how Iṣāṅkū-Aṣṭikā became an ascetic is told by Paṭṭiṅṇī whose spirit is said to have entered Dēvantikā.

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eminent saints (*paṭṭiyōr*) you renounced all
thought of the

burdens of this earth in order to secure the
kingship of

the vast realm afar-off and of eternal bliss,
incapable of

approach by even the faculty of reason.¹

‘O distinguished and good people,
you have now

heard with distinctness the auspicious
and benevolent

words of the daughter of the gods
(Kannaki) who pro -

claimed my story (through Dēvantikai). Rise
above pleasure

and pain in accordance

with the approved course of conduct.²

Know God, and serve those who have known Him.

Fear speaking falsehood. Avoid tale-bearing. Refrain

from meat-eating and abjure injury to any living being.

Give gifts and perform the prescribed penance. Do not

forget the good done to you. Despise bad friendship. Do

not give false evidence, and never depart from words of

truth. Do not fail to join assemblies of people learned in

dharama. Strive ever to escape the meeting-places of the unrighteous.

Avoid other people's wives, and give succour to

those who are dying. Protect the household

virtues, but

reject what is bad. Abstain immediately
from drinking,

theft, lust, falsehood and useless company.

Youth, wealth

1 These lines seem to be at once a
reproduction of the great
philosophic truth where occur the following :

 yatō vācō nīvantantē |
aprāpya manasā saḥ |

Taitt. Āraṇ. 8. 4. 1 and 8. 9. 1.

 ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān

| na bibhēti kutaścaneti |
Taitt. Up. 2. 4. 1 and 2. 9. 1.

2 This line and the following are a categorical list
dharmaś to be observed by all persons irrespective of caste

of
or

creed. This the Hindus call Sanātana Dharma—what we may

term the ethical aspect of Hinduism. This portion of the canto shows strong influence of the teaching of the Kura].

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and the body are impermanent.¹ You cannot escape from the days allotted to you : nor can you avoid what will happen. So seek the best help to the land of your final destination (Heaven). Do all this, O dwellers on this wide prosperous earth.'

Kaṭṭurai

'Of the three crowned monarchs, the garlanded ruler (Ceṅkuṭṭuvan) of the western kingdom of undiminished glory was born in the line of the Cēras. His virtue, martial valour and achievements, the glory of his ancient flourishing city, its gorgeous, unceasing festivals and the appearance of Dēvas, the wealth of the subjects abiding in his kingdom

of unceasing prosperity, their abundance of provisions, songs and dances with their well-defined inter-relationships, his army of sword-warriors who achieved decisive victory in battles by righteous methods, his success in pursuing the enemy (at a long distance) in the expansive foaming sea,² and his expedition to the banks of the holy Ganges—all these deeds which form a part³ of his career, are narrated in the *Vaṇcikkāṇṭam*.

1 The fundamental teaching of Hinduism is that nothing goes with the dying man except his righteous deeds.

or unrighteous

2 This shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvan had an equally formidable naval force.

here acknowledges that only a part of the career of the Cēra monarch is given. He did not furnish a full account of his life as the contents did not warrant it.

NURKATTURAI

OR

EPITOME OF THE EPIC

So ends the *Cilappatikāram*, which really ends with the contents of the story in the *Maṇimēkalai*¹. In the manner in which lofty hills are reflected in a mirror, it expresses the essence of the cool Tamil country bounded² by the Kumari, Vēṅkaṭam and the eastern and western seas, in its two quarters of pure and impure Tamil³ comprising the

five regions (*tiṇais*) where dwell man and gods
 devoted to duty
 and to the common practice⁴ of *dharma*,
artha, and *kāma*;
 and it deals in chaste language expressive of
 good sense
 in flawless rythm, with *akam* (love) and *puṇam*
 (war)⁵, and
 with worthy songs (*pāṭal*), *eḷāl*,⁶ *paṇ*,
pāṇi, *araṅku*,⁷
vilakku, and *āṭal*⁸ and other things
 which were in
 conformity with established rules of the
 well-known forms
 of *vari*, *kuravai* and *sētam*⁹ couched in
 perfect and
 understandable Tamiḷ.

1 The epic Maṇimēkālai is a continuation of
 the Cilappati-
 kāram.

2 For the boundary limits of Tamiḷakam
 see Viraśōḷiyam.

Kumari is Cape Comorin and Vēṅkaṭam the

Tirupati Hills.

3 Two kinds of Tamil were in vogue.

4 The Cilappatikāram is itself a treatise on the *Trivarga* which is *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*.

5

This presupposes a period when anthologies of the Akam

and Puṇam, have been collected under different heads and used as books.

6 *Eḷāl* is another term for *yāl*.

7 *Araṅku* is drama.

8 *Āṭel* represents different kinds of dances.

9 *Sētam* according to the Tamil Lexicon is an element in dancing. It may perhaps refer to the *Koṭṭiccātam*.

THE CILAPPATIKARAM ENDS

APPENDIX I

USE OF SANSKRIT WORDS AND THE DATE OF THE EPIC

BELOW is given a transliteration of Canto iv, 'Antimālaic-cirappucceykatai'. This canto has been chosen at random to show roughly the percentage of Sanskrit words in the text. The Sanskrit words in this canto are all italicized for the sake of easy reference. A counting of the total words in the canto furnishes the number 288. Out of these, thirty two, or eleven per cent, are Sanskrit words. In other words, for every eight Tamil words we meet with one Sanskrit word. Sanskrit

expressions form

one-ninth of the text. This shows clearly that the author

of the *Cilappatikāram* lived centuries before the authors

of the *Tēvāram*

and *Tivyappirapantam* in which the percentage of Sanskrit words is very much higher. We know

definitely that these were compositions extending from the

fifth to the tenth century A.D., and it is reasonable to

assume that the *Cilappatikāram* must have been composed

very much earlier than the fifth century A.D. As it would

take some considerable length of time to raise the per-

centage of Sanskrit words from 11 per cent to 30 per cent,

we cannot be far wrong if we assign the composition of the

epic to the second century A.D.

ANTIMĀLAIC CĪRAPPUCCEY

KĀTAI

Virikātir parappi yulakamuḷu tāṇṭa

Vorutaṇit tikiri yuravōr kāṇe

Nankaṇ vāṇat taṇinilā virikkun

Tiṇkaḷaṇ celvan yāṇṭuḷaṇ kollenat

Ticaimukam pacantu cemmaḷark

kāṇkaṇ

APPENDIX I

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Muḷunir vara muḷumeyum paṇittut

Tiraini rāṭai yirunila maṭantai

Yaraicukeṭut talamvaru mallar kālāik

Karaikelu kuṭikaḷ kaiṭalai vaippa

10 Vāraipōku kuṭikaḷo ṭorutiram parri

Valampaṭu tāṇai manṇa rilvaḷip

Pulampaṭa virutta viruntin manṇarir

Rāṭṭuṇai tuṇantōr taṇittuya reytak

Kātalarp puṇarntōr kaṇimakiḷ veytak

15 Kuḷalvaḷar mullaiyir kōvalartammoṭu

Maḷalaṭt tumpi vāyvait tūṭa

Varukār kurumperin tarumpupoṭi vāciaṇ

Cirukār celvaṇ maṇukir rūṛra

Velvaḷai makaḷir maṇivilak keṭuppa

20 Mallan mūtūr mālaivan tiruttēna

Viḷaiya rāyinuṁ pakaiyaracu kaṭiyuṇ

Cerumaṇ teṇṇar kulamuta lākali

Nanti vāṇattu veṇṇirai tōṇrip

Puṇkaṇ mālaik kurumperin toṭṭip

25 Paṇmayir ririyātu pārkatir parappi

Miṇara cāṇṭa veḷḷi viḷakkat

Tilvaḷar mullaiyoṭu mallikai yaṇiḷnta

Palpūṇ cekkaip paḷḷiyuṭ polintu

Centukirk kōvai ceṇṇēn talku

30 Lantukiṇ mēkalai yacaintaṇa varunta

Nilavuppayaṇ koḷḷu neṭunilā murrattuk

Kalaviyum pulaviyum kātalar kaṇittāṇk

Kārva neṇcamoṭu kōvalar ketirik

Kōlan koṇṭa māṭavi yaṇriyun

35 Kuṇaticai marunkiṇ Vaḷḷayir tannoṭu

Vaṭamalaip piṛanta vāṅkeḷ vaṭṭattut
Teṇmalaip piṛanta *candaṇa* marukat
Tāmaraik koḷumuriṭ tātupaṭu ceḷumalark

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- 40 Kāmaru kuvaḷaiḱ kaḷunir māmalarp
Paiṇṭaiṇṭir paṭalai parūkkā *lāraṇ*
Cuntaraccuṇṇat tukaḷoṭu maḷaiyic
Cindupu parinta ceḷumpūṇ cekkai
Mandāmā rutattu mayankiṇar

malintāṅk

- 45 Kāviyan koḷuna rakalat toṭunkik
Kāviyan kaṇṇār kaḷittuyileyta
Vaṅceṇ ciraṭi yaṇicilam poḷiya
Menruki lalkuṇ mēkalai niṅkak
Konkai muṇṇir *kunkuma* meḷutāṇ
50 *Maṅkala* vaṇiyir Piriṭaṇi maḱilāḷ
Koṭunkuḷai turantu vaṭintuviḷ kātina
Tiṅkaḷ vāṇmukaṇ ciṇuviyar piriyaḱ

- Cen kaya neṭunka *ṇaṇcaṇa* maṇappap
Pavaḷa vāṇuta *ṇilaka* miḷappat
 55 *Tavaḷa* vāṇakai kōvala ṇilappa
 Maiyirun *kūnta* neyyaṇi maṇappak
 Kaiyaṇu neṇcattuk kaṇṇaki yaṇṇiyum
 Kātalarp pirinta mātar nōtaka
 Vūtulaik kuruki nuyirttaṇa roṭuṅki
 60 Vēṇir paḷḷi mēvātu kaḷintu
 Kūtirppaḷḷik kurunka ṇaṭaittu
Malayattāramu manimut tāramu
 Malarmulai yākat taṭaiyātu varuntat
 Tāḷik kuvaḷaiyoṭu taṇcen kaḷunir
 65 Viḷpūṇ cēkkai mēvātu kaḷiyat
 Tuṇaipuṇa raṇṇat tūviyir ceritta
 Viṇaiyaṇai mēmpaṭat tiruntutuyil perā
 Tuṭaipperun koḷunaro tūtar *kālat*
 Tiṭaikkumi ierintu kāṭaikkulai yōṭṭik
 70 Kalankā vuḷḷam kalankak kataicivantu
 Vilankinimir neṭuṅkaṇ pulampumut

turaippa

Vanna mēṇṇaṭai naṇṇrp poykai
 Yampa ṇārun tēmpoti naṇuvirait

75 Paṇvāy vaṇṭu nōtiram pāṭak

Puḷvāy *muraca* moṭu porimayir vāraṇattu

Vuravunirp parappi nūrtuyi leṭuppi

80. Yiravut talaippeyarum vaikarai kārū

Viraimalar vāliyoṭu karuppuvil lenti

Nakaran káva nanisiran tatuven.

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‘TIRUVĀYMOḻI-PUKALUNALLORUVAN

1. Pukajum na! oruvanenko? Poruvilsirp

Tika!umtanparavaiyenko? Tiyenko?

Vāyuvēṅko ?

Nikaḷum ākācamēṅko ? Niḷcuṭaṭiraṇṭumēṅko

?

Ikaḷvil ivvaṇaittumēṅko ?

Kaṇṇaṇaikkūvumāre.

2 Kūvumār ariyamāṭṭēṅ kunraṇkaḷ
aṇaittumēṅko ?

Mēvucir māṭiyēṅko ? Viḷanku tāraikaḷēṅko

?

Nāviyal kalaikaḷēṅko ? nāṇanallāviyēṅko ?

Pāvucirkkaṇṇaṇ emmāṇ Pankāyak kaṇṇaṇaiye.

3 Pankāyak kaṇṇaṇēṅko ? Pavaḷacceṇ vāyaṇēṅko ?

Ankatir aṭiyaṇēṅko ? Aṇṇaṇa vaṇṇēṅko ?

Cenkatir muṭiyaṇēṅko ? Tirumaṇu

mārvāṇēṅko ?

Cankucakkarattaṇēṅko ? Cātimāṇikkattaiye.

?

4 Cātimāṇikkamēṅko ? cavikoḷpon muttamēṅko

?

Cātinalvayiramēṅko ? Tavivilcir

viḷakkamēṅko ?

Āṭiyam cōtiēṅko ? āṭiyam Puraṭaṇēṅko ?

Ātumil kālatentai accutaṇ amalaṇaiye.

3. Accutan amalanenko?

aṭiyavar vīṇaiketukkuṁ

Naccumā maruntamenko? nalankaṭ al

amutamenko?

Accuvaik kaṭṭiyenko? arucuvai yaṭicilenko?

Neycuvaŭt tĕralenŭko ? kaŭiyeŭko ?

Pālenkēno?

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6 Pālenko ? nāukuvēdap payanenko ?

Camayoniti

Nūlenko ? Nuṭaṅkukeṭvi icaiyenko ?

Ivarruinalla

Melanko ? vinaiyin mikka payanenko?

kannanenko?

Mālenko ? māyanenko ? vānavar

ātiaiyye.

7 Vānavarāṭiyenko ? Vānavar

daivamenko?

Vāṇavar *bhōkamenko* ? vāṇavar

-murrumenko?

Ūnamil celvamenko ? ūnamil

cuvarkameūko?

Unamil mōkkamenko? Oḷimaṇi
vaṇṇaṇaiye.

8 Oḷimaṇi vaṇṇaṇenko?
oruvaṇeṇṇetaninra

Naḷiramatic caṭaiyaṇenko? nāṇmukak
kaṭavuḷenko?

Aḷimakiḷantu ulakamellām paṭaittavai
yētta ninra

Kaḷimalart tuḷavaṇ emmāṇ kaṇṇaṇai
māyaṇaiye.

9 Kaṇṇaṇai māyaṇtaṇṇaik
kaṭalkaṭaintu amutamkoṇṭa

Aṇṇalai accutaṇai aṇantaṇai,
aṇantaṇtaṇmēl

Naṇṇinaṇkuraikiṇṇāṇai
jñālamuṇṭumiḷnta mālai

Eṇṇumāru aṇiyamāṭṭēṇ yāvaiyum
yavarumtāṇe.

10 Yāvaiyum yavarumtāṇay
avaravarcamayaṇtōrum

Tōyvilanpulaṇaintukkum colappaṭāṇ

uṇarvin mūrti

Āvicēruyirinuḷḷal āṭumōr parrilāta
Pāvaṇaiyataṇaikkūṭil avanaiyum

kūṭalāme.

11 Kūṭivaṇṭaṇaiyum taṇṭark kontalpol

vannantannai

Maṭalarpolil kurukūr vaṇ *Caṭakōpaṇ*

conna

Pāṭalōrayirattuḷ Ivaiyum

orupattumvallār

Vṇṭila bōkamaiti viṇumpuvar

amararmoyitte.

APPENDIX II

ASTRONOMICAL DATA AND THE DATE OF THE *CILAPPATIKĀRAM*

IN commenting on the first three lines of Canto x of the *Cilappatikāram*, Aṭiyārkunallār furnishes some interesting astronomical data as to the commencement and duration of Indra's festival, the sea reverie of Kōvalan and Mātavi, and the date on which Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki left Pukār for Madura. The texts in question give only a hint as to the time of starting for Madura; but collecting the details as given in the *Maṇimēkalai*, and in 'Kaṭalāṭu- kātai', Aṭiyārkunallār has done some valuable research which deserves our close examination and scrutiny. As I have remarked in the footnote on the three opening lines of Canto x, the late L. D. Swamikannu Pillai put the date to severe test and came to the conclusion that the premises were incorrect. I felt the subject required further investigation, and with the aid of my friend Mr P. R. Chidambaram Aiyar of the Kodaikanal Observatory, I have been able to arrive at a more or less satisfactory conclusion.

Let me first state what Aṭiyārkkuṇallar has to say.

The full moon day in the month of *Cittirai*, during which the festival of Indra commenced, fell on a Saturday. The festival was celebrated for four weeks. It ended on the twenty-eighth day of the month of *Vaikāsi* during the sea reverie when Kōvalan suspected Mātavi's attitude towards him and *vice versa*. This resulted in their misunderstanding and consequent separation. According to Aṭiyārkkuṇallar's calculation, this day of misunderstanding (*ūṭutal*) was a Monday, the thirteenth *tithi* of *Pūrvapakṣa* when

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the ruling asterism was *Anuṣa*. The very next day, i.e. the twenty-ninth day of *Vaikāsi* (which

was a Tuesday and the fourteenth *tithi* of the *Pūrvapakṣa*), during the asterism *Keṭṭai*, very early in the morning, before the sun rose but when the moon had disappeared, Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki set forth for Madura. Aṭiyārkunallār remarks that that was a particularly inauspicious time and led to the death of those who started at that particular hour.¹

In a later Canto² Aṭiyārkunallār tells us in an informing note that the very day when the outskirts of Madura were reached by Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki was the last day of the month of *Āṇi*. As we have already seen, according to that commentator the couple left Pukar for Madura on the 29th of *Vaikāṣi*, and if his calculation is to be believed, it took a full month and a little more for the

travellers to

reach Madura. If they had started on the 29th
of *Vaikāsi*

which was a Tuesday, and if they reached the outskirts
on the last day of *Āṇi*, then it must have been a Thursday.
We hear in a still later Canto³ that Madura was destroyed
by fire on a day of *Bharaṇi-Kṛuttikai*,

Aṣṭami during the

dark fortnight in the month of *Āṣi*, on a Friday
about mid-

night. An attempt has been made, rightly,
to reject Mr

Swamikannu Pillai's theory of 756 A.C.; for,
his calcula-

tions do not seem to satisfy any of the data
furnished either

by the text or the commentary.⁴ Evidently the
burning

of Madura took place on the first of *Āṣi*
which was a

1 See also his commentary on ll. 5-6
'Kaṭalāṭukatai.'

'Puraṇcārīruttakāṭal.' ll. 30-7, and especially l. 36.

3 xlii, ll. 133-7.

4 See K. G. Sankar's article in Q.J.M.S., Vol. VIII, pp. 34-60. But his theory of 157 A.C. also does not cover all astronomical details.

APPENDIX II

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Friday. On the last day of

Ani, they were Mataris' guests for the day and in the evening Kōvalaṇ went with the anklet into the city and was executed. Immediately Kaṇṇaki met the king and cursed that the city be consumed by flames.

While we are discussing the date of the *Cilappattikāram* from an astronomical viewpoint, it is better to say a word about the reference to Friday in the epic. Years ago when Indological researches were in their infancy, Dr Fleet suggested that India borrowed weekdays from Greece about A.D. 400 and put

them to popular use not earlier than A.D. 800. Granting that India is a borrower in this respect, she need not necessarily be indebted to the Greeks who were themselves borrowers and perhaps had no knowledge of weekdays before the first century A.D. A more reasonable suggestion would be that borrowing had taken place direct from the Chaldeans whose intercourse with India from at least the time of Darius (500 B.C.) cannot be disputed. The use of weekdays in ancient Hindu literature is not rare. The *Purāṇas*, like the *Matsya* (ch.

93, ll. 10-20) and *Vishṇu* (Bk. I, ch. 12), refer to planets in the order of weekdays. The *Vaikhāṇasa sūtra*, which cannot be later than the second century B.C., mentions the *Budhavāra*. Besides, we perform the *arghyam* every day in weekday order during our *sandhya* prayers. This has to be traced to the *Parisishtas* of *Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra*. It may be contended that the *Parisishtas* are held to be later than the texts of the *Grhyasūtra*.

Even if this position were accepted, that portion cannot be later than by one or two centuries. These facts, among others, show

the ancient use of weekdays in the Hindu calendar and the reference to Friday cannot be taken as an argument to assign a later date for the composition.

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Proceeding to work upon the data given by Atiyarkkunallar, and by bringing the evidence of the Gajabahu synchronism to clinch it, we find the year A.D. 174 answers nearly perfectly. In this year the first of *Cittirai* was a Tuesday, and would be 16 March in the Gregorian calendar. The following table may clarify our position :

174 A.D.

1st *Cittirai*

First new moon in the

year

Duration from new
moon to new moon =

Days in the month
First new moon in
Vaikāsi

Interval to full moon =

Days in the month =

Full moon day (May) =

16 March (Tuesday)

4.7997

20 7997 March (Saturday)

29.5306

50.3303

31

19.3303 (April, Mon-
day)

14.7653¹

34.0956

30

4.0956 (Tuesday) in
Vaikāsi

This Tuesday the fourth of May in A.D. 174 coincides with *Kēṭṭai naksatram* in the early morning. What we have to note here is that *Paurṇima* and not *Caturtasi* ends

1 If we subtract the interval in tithi 14·7653 from 19·3033, we get 4·5650, when occurred the full moon in April, on a Sunday.

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early in the forenoon on Tuesday. There is the *Kṛṣṇa* *nakṣatram* before sunrise on that day. In questions of chronology from an astronomical standpoint, there is bound to be a certain amount of uncertainty. This is largely due to the different *Siddhāntas* or systems followed by different schools of thought, such as the *Sūryasiddhānta*, the *Āryasiddhānta*, *Vākya*, etc. What system was in use in the age of Iṣāṅkō-Aṭikaḥ, the author of the epic, it is rather difficult to determine. But for our purpose, there is indicated the astronomical fact that on the early morning in question the moon had set before the sun rose, although it is difficult to know, in the absence of accurate data, what was the actual interval

between the setting of
the moon and the rising of the sun.

As to whether *sauramāna* or *cāndramāna* was in vogue at the time, there is no room for doubt, since the word

Cittirai (which is the one used by Aṭiyārkunallar) has always meant the solar month, the corresponding lunar month being known as *Caitra*. As the text of Aṭiyārkunallar is clear in the use of the expression *Cittirai* and not *Caitra*, it can be easily conceded that the commentator used the *sauramāna* method of reckoning. I am aware that we should not rely entirely on the astronomical combination as evidence in itself. For the argument is that, as the event took place at a particular time of day when a particular astronomical combination was prevailing, a certain number of cycles of the moon in its two aspects, viz. *tithi* and *naksatra*, must coincide with a certain number of revolutions of the sun, along with a certain number of weeks, and multiples of the hours in a day. This will be the L.C.M. of the sidereal period of the moon, the synodic period of the moon, the solar year, the week, the hours in a day.

As one is not divisible by the other, roughly
the product

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of all these quantities has to be taken to be the period that would elapse before the same *tithi* and *naksatra* on the same day of the week could be expected to occur again at that particular hour of the day in that particular part of the year. This can by no means be a short period. This particular case, one may say, would only recur after some centuries. We can therefore easily set aside 756 A.C. fixed by the late Swamikannu Pillai.

My object in examining the data furnished by Aṭiyark-kunallar was to see whether it would supplement other inferable historical facts which have led us to fix the age of the composition of the *Cilappatikāram* in the second half of the second century A.D. Our examination has proved beyond doubt that the astronomical data given by Aṭiyarkkunallar are

very strong contributory evidence for fixing the date as the second century A.D. The details furnished by the commentator fit in with the year A.D. 174, and this date fully satisfies the Gajabahu synchronism as Gajabahu had ascended the throne three years earlier in A.D. 171.

APPENDIX III

MUSIC IN THE *CILAPPATIKĀM*¹

THE ancient Tamils possessed a highly developed system of music. This is evident from a perusal of the Tamil classics. Their musical culture was at a high level. Works dealing exclusively with the science of

music were

written during the Caṅkam period, but they were lost long

ago. The *Cilappatikāram* of the second century A.D.

throws a flood of light on the music of the Tamils. Music

in Tamil nomenclature is *icai*. An etymological inter-

pretation is furnished by Aṭiyākkunallar in the closing

lines of his elaborate commentary on Canto iii, l. 26.*

Those who practised music were styled *Pāṇar* and some-

times *Perumpāṇar*. These expressions occur frequently

in the epic. There was a community, which included flutists

and drummers, whose hereditary occupation was music.

Even a section of Brahmanas and Ambaṇavar took to

music as a profession. We
 get more interesting
 details of *paṇ* if we turn to
 Aṭiyārkunallār's gloss to
 ll. 160-7 of Canto xiv. Four
 division of *paṇ* were
 distinguished. These are *pālai*, *Kuṟiñci*,
Marutam and
Cevvāḷi, suggesting at once a classification after
 the regions,
 in other words, specific melody types.
 The different
 musical pieces were brought under some
 classification or
 other. One classification was tenfold;
centurai, *veṇṭurai*,

I I am indebted to Sri P. Sambamurti, Lecturer in Music,
 University of Madras, for helping me in writing this appendix. I
 have also drawn upon two lectures on 'Ancient
 Tamil Music' by
 Swami Vipulananda, reported in The Hindu
 February 1936.
 on 25 and 26

perumtēvapaṇi, *cīrutēvapaṇi*, *muttakam*,
peruvaṇṇam, *aruvuvari*, *kāṇalvari*, *virimuraṇ*,
and *talaipōkumaṇṇilam*,¹ Almost all these
pieces of music are found referred to directly
or indirectly in the epic. For example,
centuraḷ and *veṇṇuraḷ* are implied in Canto iii, l.
29. *Perumtēva- paṇi* and *cīrutēvapaṇi* are used
in ordinary music as also in *naṭākat-tamiḷ* or
dramatic compositions. While *perum- tēvapaṇi* is
used in praise of Baladeva, *cīrutēvapaṇi* was
used in praise of caste *būtas*.¹ Examples of
aruvuvari are the three songs on the Kāvēri in
Canto vii. The whole of Canto vii is entitled
‘Kāṇalvari’. This epic helps us to understand
the nature of their fundamental scale, the
resultant scales that they obtained by the
modal shift of tonic, the *ragas* that they used,

the musical forms in vogue at that time, the instruments that they used in concerts, the types of dances cultivated and many other useful details relating to their art.

'Araṅkērrukātai' and 'Acciyarkuravai' are two cantos

containing a mine of information relating to Tamil music.

THE CUDDHA-MELA

(FUNDAMENTAL SCALE) The ancient Tamils

used a scale of twenty-two *srutis*. In other words they recognized and used as many as twenty-two notes in the *sthayi* or octave. This is exactly the number of notes that a refined ear can distinguish and use in a *saptaka*. The terms *alaku* (அலகு) and *matra* (மரத்திரை) are used as the equivalent of *sruti*. It was the scale of just intonation that they used. The notes of their foundation scale (*suddha-mēla*) had the following *sruti* values:

1. This is found in Cikaṇḍiyār's Icaṇṇuṇṇukkam.
See text, p. 190.

2. Canto iii, l. 107.

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4	4	3	2	4	3	2
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

The figure 4 is the equivalent of a *catussruti* interval (9/8, major tone); the figure 3 is the equivalent of a *tristruti* interval (10/9 minor tone); and the figure 2 is the equivalent of a *dvistruti* interval (16/15, semitone). In the series: 4 4 3 2 4 3 2, each figure signifies the value of the interval between the note it stands for and its previous note. Thus in the *suddha* scale of the ancient Tamils there were three *catussruti* intervals (3 major tones), two *tristruti* intervals (2 minor tones) and two *dvistruti* intervals (2 semitones). There was a *Catussruti* interval between *ni* and *sa* (i.e. between *tāram* and *kural*), between *sa* and *ri* (i.e. between *kural* and *tuttam*), and between *ma* and *pa* (i.e. between *uḷai* and *iḷi*). There was a *tristruti* interval between *ri* and *ga* (i.e. between *tuttam* and *kaikkīḷai*) and between *pa* and *dha* (i.e. between *iḷi* and *viḷari*). The *dvistruti* interval existed between *ga* and *ma* (i.e. between *kaikkīḷai* and *uḷai*) and between *dha* and *ni* (i.e. between *viḷari* and *tāram*). That is expressed in modern terminology thus :

4	4	3	2	4	3	2
(ni) sa	ri	ga	ma	pa	dha	ni
$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$	$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$	$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$	$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$	$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$	$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$	$\underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}$
$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{10}{9}$	$\frac{16}{15}$	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{10}{9}$	$\frac{16}{15}$
<i>catussruti</i>	<i>catussruti</i>	<i>tristruti</i>	<i>dvistruti</i>	<i>catussruti</i>	<i>tristruti</i>	<i>dvistruti</i>
interval	interval	interval	interval	interval	interval	interval

$$\frac{9}{8} \times \frac{9}{8} \times \frac{10}{9} \times \frac{16}{15} \times \frac{9}{8} \times \frac{10}{9} \times \frac{16}{15} = 2$$

In other words, the frequencies of the notes figuring in the *suddha* scale were:

	s	r	g	m	p	dha	
n	s	1	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{4}{3}$	$\frac{3}{2}$	$\frac{5}{3}$
2							$\frac{16}{9}$

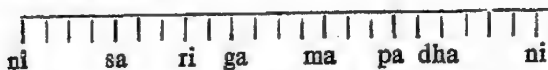
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Representing these facts in a more visual manner, the

svrasthānas of the Tamil *suddha* scale will appear in the following places :



This scale approximates to the modern *harikāmbhōji*

mēla and so it follows that the *suddha* scale of the ancient

Tamils was *harikāmbhōji*.¹

It is interesting to note that the *suddha* scale of Bharata

had the following *sruti* values :

4 3 2 4 4 3 2

It is evident from this that the tonic note of the Tamil

scale was the fourth note or the *madhyama* of the scale of

Bharata. The fourth note of Bharata's scale when taken

as the tonic results in *harikāmbhōji*. We may say that

the *suddha* scale of the ancient Tamils was the *madhyama*

murchana of *sadja grāma* just as the modern *sankarābharaṇa* is the *nisāda murchana* of *sadja grāma*. In other words, the *suddha* scale of Bharata is the *pañcama murchana* of the

suddha scale. That *harikāmbhōji* is the *suddha-mēla* of the

ancient Tamils is a fact not hitherto

noticed by many

scholars. An analysis of *paṇs* reveals that a substantial

number of them are in *rāgas* which are either derivatives

of *harikāmbhōji* or are in *rāgas* which use a majority of

svaras belonging to the *harikāmbhōji* scale. One merit

of this scale is that the notes² figuring therein can be sounded

pure and that one can stand on them for a length of

1 *Harikāmbhōji* takes the same notes as the major scale of

European music except that B flat takes the place of B natural.

2 It is evident that these notes could not have belonged to

one and the same octave.

time. There are other interesting facts in support of

harikāmbhōji. The following *sloka* gives the names of

the animals and birds whose cries approximated to the

pitch of the *sapta svaras* :

ṣadjam mayūrō vadati gavastvṛṣabha
bhasinaḥ |

ajāvikantu gāndhāram krouncaḥ kraṇati
madhyamam ||

puṣpa sādharāṇē kālē pikaḥ kūjati
pañcamam |

dhaivataṁ hr̥ṣatē vāji niṣādam bṛmhate
gajaḥ ||

Tamīl books associate the following animals and birds

with the *sapta svaras* : வண்டு (beetle),
கிளி (parrot),

குதிரை (horse), யானை (elephant), குயில் (cuckoo), பசு (cow) and ஆடு (goat).

The fact that the notes of the *suddha* scale were

compared to the cries of certain animals and birds is proof

that our ancients had a conception of absolute pitch.

NAME OF THE SVARAS	SANSKRIT LIST	TAMIL LIST
Sa	Peacock	Beetle
Ri	Cow	Parrot
Ga	Goat	Horse
Ma	Heron	Elephant
Pa	Indian nightingale	Cuckoo
Dha	Horse	Cow
Ni	Elephant	Goat

A perusal of the above table reveals the fact that all except two are animals common to both lists. Since the

sadja grāma is the *pañcama mūrchanā* of the

Tamil *suddha*

scale, it will be found that the lists of animals and birds also agree in a corresponding manner except that the

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beetle and the parrot take the place of the heron and the cuckoo of the Sanskrit list. This list supplies more evidence to show that the *suddha* scale of the Tamils was the *harikāmbhōji* scale, viz. the *madhyama mūrchanā* of the *śadja grāma*.

RĀGAS

By the modal shift of tonic, seven *mūrchanas* or scales

were derived. They are named :
cempalai, paṇumalaip-

pālai, cevvaḷippālai, arumpālai,
kōṭippālai, viḷarippālai

and *mērcempālai*. The initial (tonic) notes of these

scales progress in the *avarōhaṇa krama* (downward series).

The use and application of the seven *pālais* are seen in

Canto iii, ii. 59-60 and ll. 70-1, and the commentary of

Arumpatavuraīyācīriyar thereon. It is said that when

Mātaṇḍi sang, she well observed the four *sātis*: *akani-*

laimarutam, *puṇḍanilaimarutam*,
aruḱiyanmarutam and

peruḱiyanmarutam and had an eye to the threefold *iyak-*

kam which may be rendered high, low, and middle pitch

(Canto vii, ll. 35-44). The distinction of *alakus* or *srutis*

has been tabulated as follows :

Cempālai

... 4 4 3 2 4 3 2

Patumalaippālai

... 2 4 4 3

2 4 3	<i>Cevvaḷippālai</i>	... 3 2
4 4 3 2 4	<i>Arumpālai</i>	... 4 3 2 4
4 3 2	<i>Kōṭippālai</i>	... 2 4 3
2 4 4 3	<i>Viḷarippālai</i>	... 3 2 4 3
2 4 4	<i>Mērcempālai</i>	... 4 3 2 4
3 2 4		

Four main *pālais* are referred to which correspond to derivative *grāmas*, and fresh scales were derived by the process of modal shift of tonic in each case. *Campūrṇa* *rāgas* (heptatonic scales) were called *paṇ* (பாண்) and *varja* *rāgas* (transilient scales) *tīram* (தீறம்).

நிறைந்த நரம்பு நிகழும் பண்ணெனல்
குறைந்த நரம்பு திறமெனக் கொள்க.

Tiram is also used in the sense of an *auṭava rāga* (pentatonic scale). *Paṇṇiarriram* signified a *sodara rāga* (hexatonic scale) and *tirattiram* signified a *svarantara rāga* (a scale with four notes).

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Music was always associated with dancing in ancient times. It is no wonder therefore that all the information we are given about ancient Tamil music is in connexion with the dances of Mātavi and the group dance recounted in a later canto of the *Cilappatikaram*. The treatment of music as a separate art, i.e. independent of its relation to

dancing, is found only in later works.

A remarkable feature of the education of an actress, which began in her fifth year, was a thorough training in dancing and music. Among other things the young girl

was trained to sing songs composed in foreign languages and to play on the *yāl*, the drum, and the flute. In addition to the drummer, lute player and flutist, there was the musician of honour or chief musician, and a composer of songs who improvised pieces suitable to all occasions. This bears great testimony to the creative mind of the composer. From the fact that a separate music master is mentioned we have to assume that this composer may or may not have been a musician himself, for it is said that verses composed by him were set to music by the musician.

There is an elaborate description of the harpist and the harp in ll. 70-94 of

'Araṅkērukātai'. The passage in question has been rendered difficult of correct interpretation by Aṭiyārkkuṇallār's not commenting on these lines except to give a few short notes, most of which are copied from the 422

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commentary of Arumpatavuraiyācīriyar. But with the materials available, it seems fairly certain that *cakōṭayaḷ* was the kind of harp generally used on the stage by a debutante. It had fourteen major strings. The flute usually preceded the harp. In other words the song was started by the flutist and followed by the harpist. Then there was the beating of the *maddalam*, the *kuṭamuḷavu* and the *idakkai*, one following the other. *Idakkai* was a musical instrument used for keeping time. Sometimes one and the same song was played on the harp and the flute at one and the same time.

Thus we see that instruments in those times were used for accompaniments.

The three great instruments, viz. *viṇa* *vēṇu* and *mirudangam*, have their parallels in the *yāl*, *kuḷal* and *maddalam* of the Tamils. Since the range of the human voice was three octaves the compass of the stringed and wind instruments used for accompaniments was also of the same range. The three octaves were respectively called the *mandavisai* (lower octave or the *mandra sthāyi*), *samanisai* (middle octave or the *madhya sthāyi*) and *vallisai* (higher octave or the *tāra sthāyi*). The strings of the *yāl* were tuned to notes of absolute pitch and the instrument itself was played on open strings. It is evident that in addition to metallic strings of different varieties and thickness and density, gut must also have been used. Conclusions based solely on the lengths of the strings of the *yāl* in the absence of data relating to their nature, cross section, and density must necessarily be

incorrect. The strings of the *yāl* were named after the notes to which they were tuned. This facilitated the playing of different *rāgas* by the modal shift of tonic. In the absence of facilities for the introduction of *gāmakas*, we have to conclude that the *yāl* produced only pure notes. The basic melody was played by the

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yāl player and the melody was adorned by *gāmakas* from the flute which also repeated the melody in the higher octave. In a medallion from the Amaravati sculpture preserved in the archaeological gallery of the Madras Government Museum we see a woman playing the *yāl*, indicating that the instrument was very popular during the time of the *Cilappatikaram* and the centuries preceding it.

Varieties of Yāl. Mention has already been made of the *cakōṭayāl* which was

usually a stage instrument. Among other kinds referred to are the *pēriyāl* as opposed to *ciriyāl*. The first was a large harp consisting of twenty-one strings while the second was a small harp with seven strings. Among the different varieties of *yāl*, these two seem to be very ancient. But in the early centuries of the Christian era we find reference to *makara yāl* distinguished by seventeen strings and *cakōṭayāl* with fourteen strings. These *yāls* or harps were early in use. Here and there we meet with descriptions of them and of how they were sometimes inlaid with gems and kept in decorated cases.

In other Caṅkam classics, like the *Poruṇararruppatai*, *Malaipaṭuka-ṭam* and *Kallāṭam*, we find descriptions of *yāl*. One gathers from all these that the *pēriyāl* was a pretty instrument and was portable. Its twenty-one strings represented the three *sīhāyis* of seven notes each.

The *yāl* and the *vīṇa* are not identical instruments. The former had no frets. The term *vīṇa* has been used by some writers to mean stringed instruments generally but latterly it has come to denote a stringed instrument with frets. Māṇikkavācakar says: 'இன்னிசை வினையர் யாழினர் ஒருபால்' and so it is clear that there were two distinct instruments. The *yāl* was a majestic and beautiful

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instrument and must have produced impressive and melodious music. It became obsolete some eight centuries ago. It ceased to be in use the moment the fretted *vīṇa* with its great musical possibilities appeared on the firmament of South Indian music.

The instrumentalists of those days seem to have reached a high standard of playing. Their

finger technique,
the skill with which they displayed the *ghana
naya bhavas*,
the wonderful command that they
possessed over their
instruments and the artistic finish of their
performances
are all echoed in the *Cilappatikaram*.
The performers
had their allotted seats on the stage.

PARALLEL IDEAS

There are many paralalled ideas in the
ancient works
on music in Tamil and Sanskrit. The
similarities in the
values of the *sruti* intervals and the names
of animals and
birds whose cries approximated to the
seven notes have
already been referred to.
Ni was the first note in the *yaḷ*
and it was to this same note that the string of the
viṇa was

tuned in ancient times. The classifications of *svaras* into *vadi*, *samvadi*, *anuvadi* and *vivadi* have their correspondence in *inai* (இளை), *kiḷai* (கிளை), *naṭpu* (நட்பு), and *pakai* (பகை) notes.

It is a pity that the beautiful musical system of the ancient Tamils is now lost. Even in the times of Aṭiyār-kunallār it was quite forgotten. Some of the ancient *paṇs* are however still used in the recitals of the *Tevaram* hymns.

THE PATTINĪ CULT THROUGH THE AGES

IN *Ceylon*, more than in India, the Pattinī cult has continued for a long time. In the march of years many legends have grown round the origin and career of Kaṇ-ṇaki, and the Sinhalese tradition is very different from what obtains in South India. In Ceylon Pattinī has been regarded as Durgā with as many as eight Kāṇis waiting in attendance on her. She causes and cures epidemics like smallpox, and so prayers are offered at her shrine.¹ One mode of prayer was the worship of the anklet symbol (*cilampu*) which was placed in a decorated vessel with the figure of a cobra moulded on it. There are works in Sinhalese entitled *Calampa Kathava* and *Pattinī Pidima* dealing with the career of Pattinī and the ritual of offering prayers to her.² The cult has become so popular that in one district alone, Jaffna, there are as many as a dozen temples to Pattinī. Many miraculous deeds are

attributed to her. It is not possible nor necessary to give all details concerning the cult in an appendix like this. One such miraculous deed was that when she planted her foot on a rock, there gushed forth a fountain of water.

H. Parker, the author of *Ancient Ceylon*, refers to this cult in more than one place. In the last portions of his book he records a tradition that Kāṇṇaki was reborn a demoness and entered Ceylon with two sons of the Pāṇṭyan king, notwithstanding the stout opposition from the four guardian deities of the island. We are told that this

1 H. Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 151, 161.

2 *Cey. Ant.*, Vol. I, No. 2. p. 128.

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the Fire-Walking Ceremony conducted every year in her honour.¹

Still another interesting story current in certain parts of Ceylon is that Kannaḡi was a daughter of the Pāṇṭyan King. Astrologers predicted that she would be the ruin of the Pāṇṭyan kingdom. The King who believed this put his daughter in a box and left it afloat on a river. Two members of the Vaiśya caste, who were merchants by profession, noticed this box and had it rescued. The names of these merchants were Maṇakkar and Mācattar. The former adopted her as his daughter and the latter's son married her in course of time.² This tradition has special interest for us in South India as the Kōvalan drama is still shown on the stage and very popularly attended. The Tamil dramatic representation has more or less adopted this Ceylonese tradition in its delineation of the early life of Kōvalan and Kannaḡi.

This now leads us to inquire into the different turns which the epic episode of Kaṇṇakī has taken in South India.² One is the association of this Pattinī cult with the Draupadī Amman festival, Draupadī being the chaste queen of the five Pāṇṭava brothers. Tradition affirms that she is one of the five *kanyas* whose names are daily remembered so as to keep the torchlight of morality even burning throughout the length and breadth of this land. Tamil tradition refers to Draupadī as *aliyata pattinī*, the eternal Pattinī or an incarnation of chastity. Later tradition has confounded the Kaṇṇakī cult with the Draupadī cult, and

1 Parker, op. cit., pp. 632-3.

2 Cey. Ant., Vol. VIII, No. 8. p. 252.

3 See M. Raghava Aiyangar's *Cēran Cēṅkuṭṭuvan*,

4: *Āraḷyccittokuti*, pp. 238-40.

the whole thing has been treated as the Pattinī cult in general. Draupadiyamman Utsavam is a popular festival in Tamil India today, and in some places this is connected with a fire-walking ceremony.

That the Pattinī cult was once prevalent throughout South India is seen from the fact that even to the present day festivals in her honour are celebrated in a village on the outskirts of the town of Negapatam (Tanjore District) underneath a tree; in the region of Ārrūr (Madura District); and among the primitive Toda tribes in the-Nilgiris.

Still more interesting is the story contained in a popular book entitled *Kovalankatai* attributed to a certain Puka-

lentiyaṛ. This is probably a composition of 300 or 400 years ago. There is a similar version in a manuscript in

the Malayāla country, showing some agreement with the *Kovalankatai*. It is said that the Bhagavati worshipped in Chengaṇūr or Triccheṇkapūr in Malabar was none other than *Kaṇṇakitevi*, who took the role of a Kai, popularly known as Durgatevi, and finally settled in Tiruvorriyūr, the northern limit of the city of Madras. She became known there as Vattapuriyamman. There is a separate shrine to the deity in the northern *prakara* of the famous

Tiruvorriyūr temple, and every year a festival is held in her honour lasting for fifteen days. Local tradition affirms that in ancient days a goldsmith was regularly offered to this deity in connexion with this festival. But once a goldsmith poet praised the goddess in suitable terms and extracted a promise that an animal would thereafter be substituted. One conspicuous feature of this festival is that on the last day, the special *pandal* erected for the sacrifice is fired, as a symbolical representation of the burning down of Madura city by Kaṇṇaki. This only demonstrates how the cult spread from one part of the land to the other, from Malabar to Coromandel.

Much more interesting is the tradition by which the Bhagavati enshrined at Cranganore goes by the name of Orraimulaicci, the goddess with one breast. How and when this metamorphosis of the Pattinī cult into the Bhagavati and Kaji cult of a demoness took place, it is difficult to say at this distance of time. Though the text of the *Cilappatikaram* does not give us any hint on this point, yet by the time of Arumpatavuraiyaciriyar, this transformation had become an accomplished fact. He says in one place that Kappaki was born as Durgā. This is due to the fact, to hazard a guess, that as Kaji worship was popular in the Tamil land from the earliest times, the Pattinī cult had in course of time been intimately associated with it.

Whatever may have been the later developments of the cult, it is certain that immediately following the foundation of the first shrine to Pattinīdēvi by Ceṅkuṭṭuvan in the second century A.D., it was introduced into countries outside the Tamilnāṭu, like, Ceylon and Malva, and became a universal cult not only in South India and Ceylon but also in some parts of the Deccan.¹

1 Yet another distorted version of the story is found in M. Frere's *Old Deccan Days* (published in 1868 by John Murray, London) in a tale called 'Chandra's Vengeance'. Kovalan is called Koila, and Kannaki is Chandra. The story goes that Koila, son of a sowkar, was captivated by a dancing-girl called Moulee and had won the garland by which he became her husband. After dire circumstances, Koila and his wife reached Madura where an old milk-seller offered them hospitality. A jeweller of that place who had deprived the Rani of a bangle, accused Koila of stealing it and had him cut in twain. Chandra set fire to the city although the old milk-seller advised her to spare the *purwari* (residences of low castes). Then she sewed the two halves of the dead body and prayed to Śiva to give it life. Koila was resurrected and returned home with Chandra. (This is a version of the story told to Frere in Goa by an *ayah*. The *ayah* herself had heard it from her grandparents who were living in Calicut.)

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